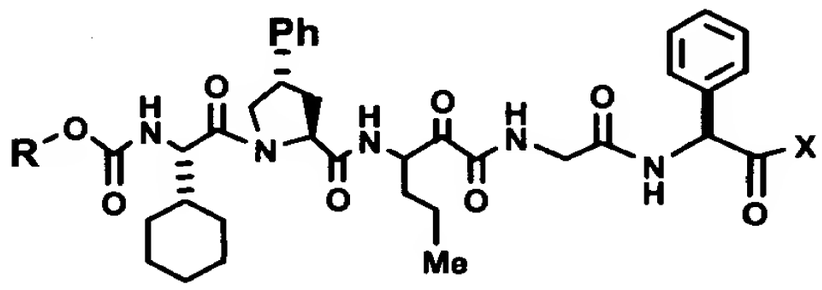
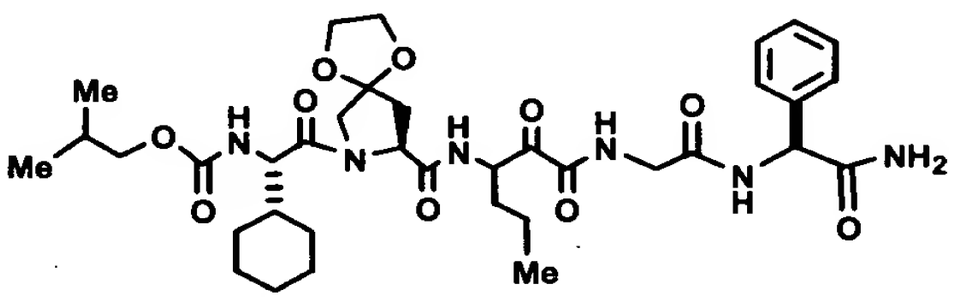
IN THE CLAIMS

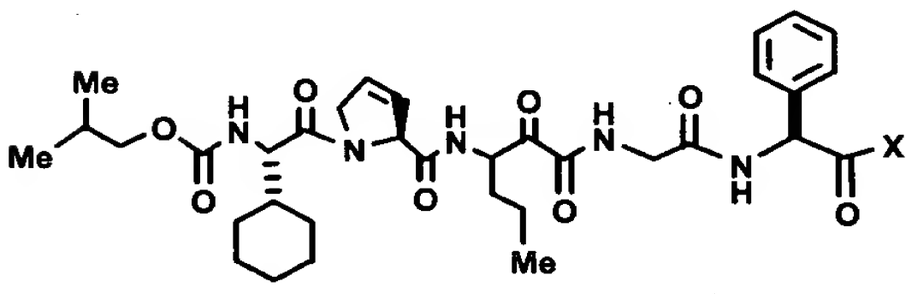
1.-38. (canceled)

39. (previously presented) A compound exhibiting hepatitis C virus (HCV) protease inhibitory activity, including enantiomers, stereoisomers, rotamers, tautomers, racemates and prodrug of said compound, and pharmaceutically acceptable salts or solvates of said compound, or of said prodrug, said compound being selected from the compounds of structures listed below:

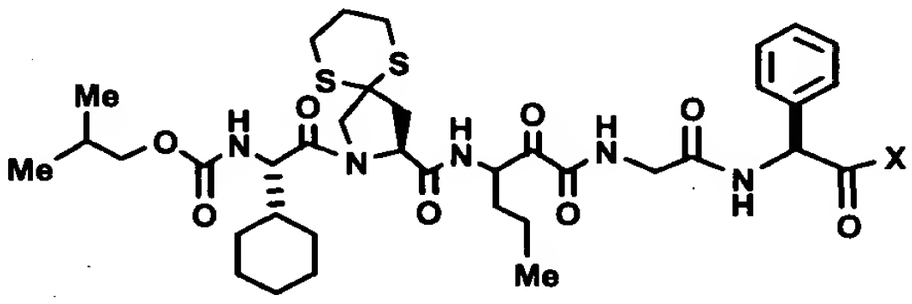


(R = t-butyl, X = NH_2)
(R = Isobutyl, X = NH_2)
(R = t-butyl, X = OH)
(R = Trichloroethyl, X = OH)

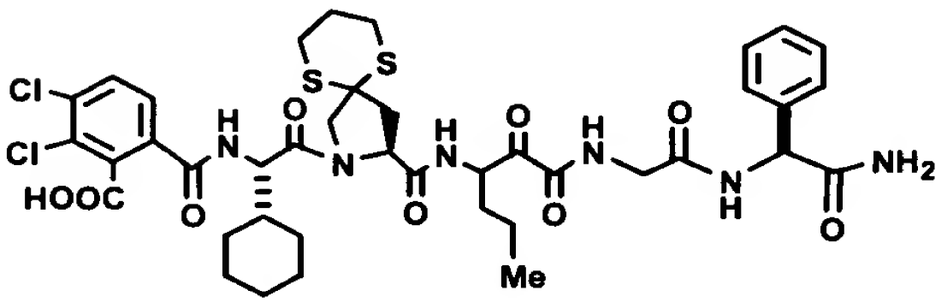


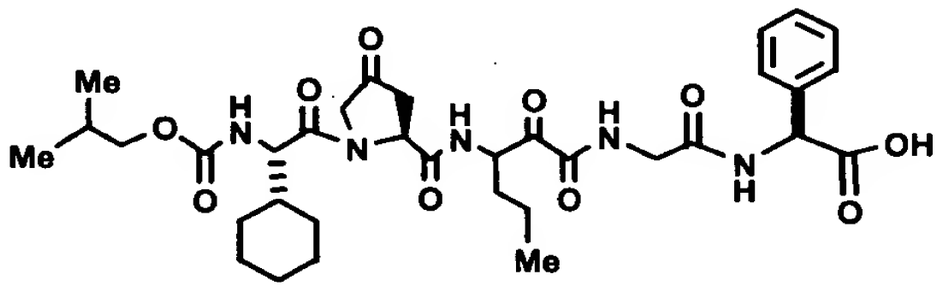


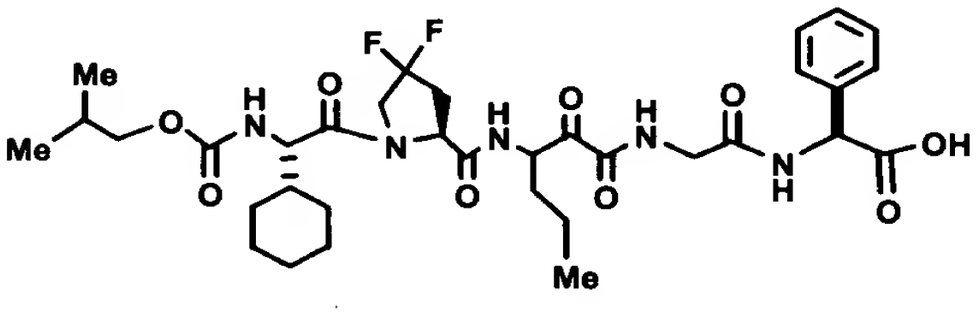
(X = O^tBu)
(X = OH)

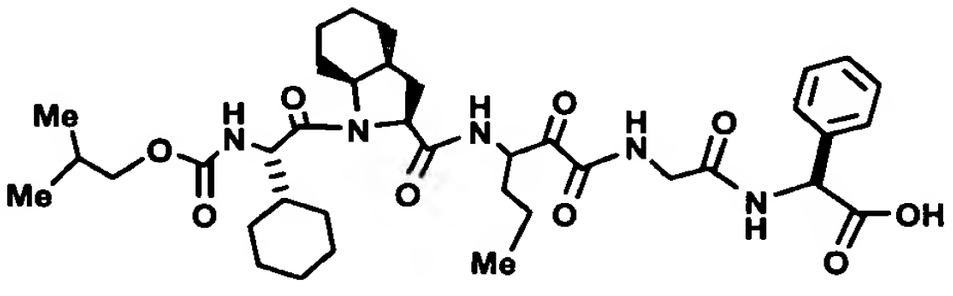


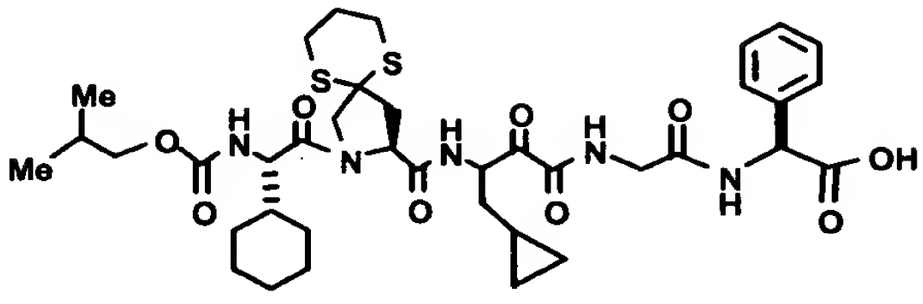
(X = OH) (X = NHMe)
(X = O^tBu) (X = NMe_2)
(X = NH_2)

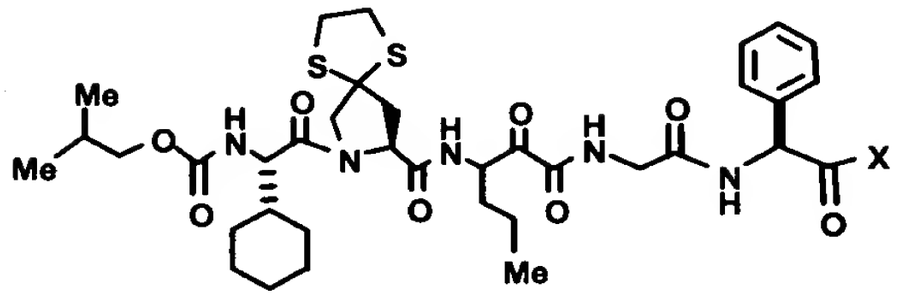




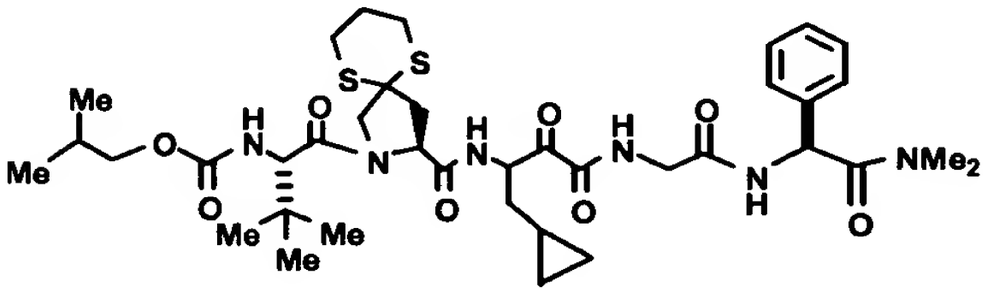


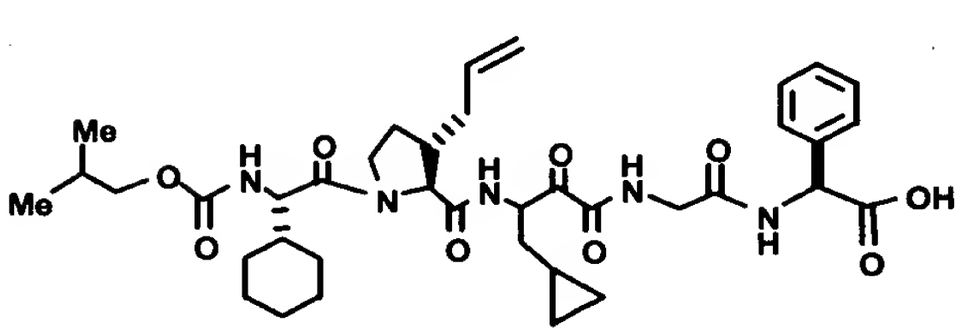


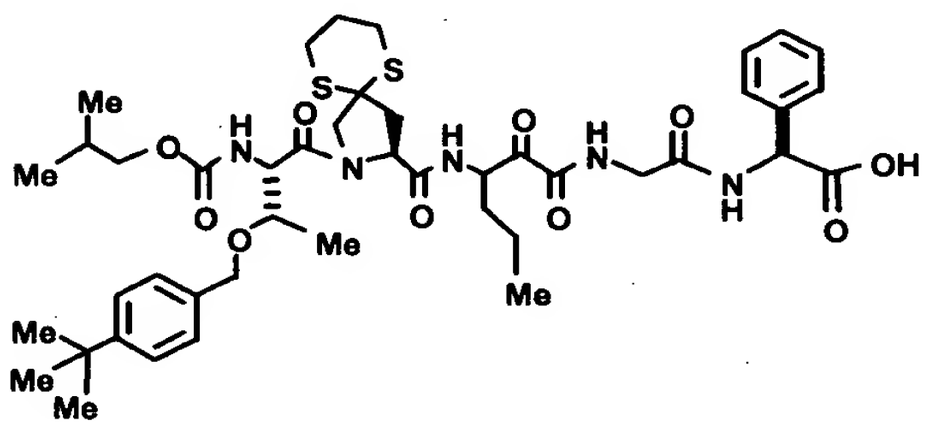


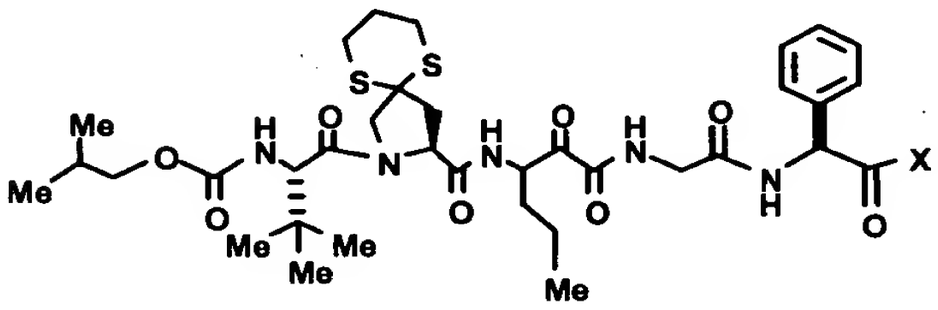


(X = NH_2)
(X = NMe_2)
(X = NHMe)
(X = OH)

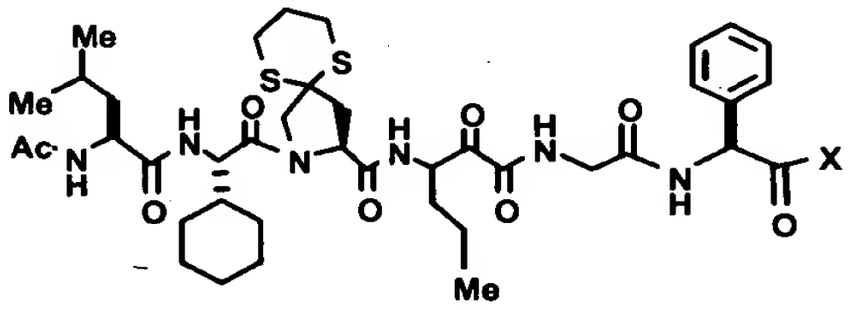




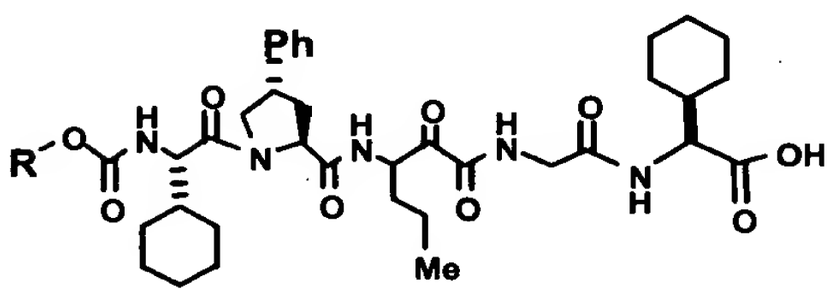




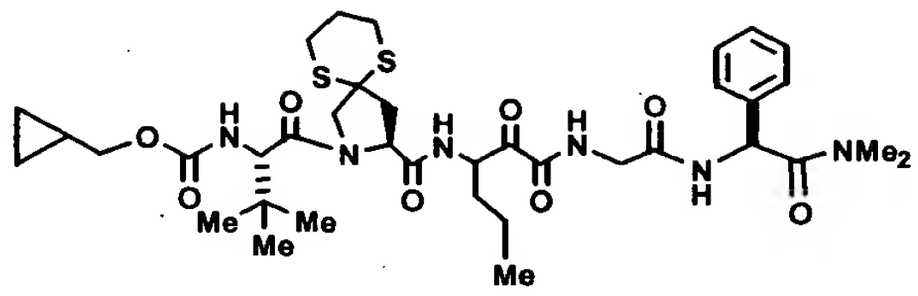
(X = O^tBu)
(X = OH)
(X = NH_2)
(X = NMe_2)

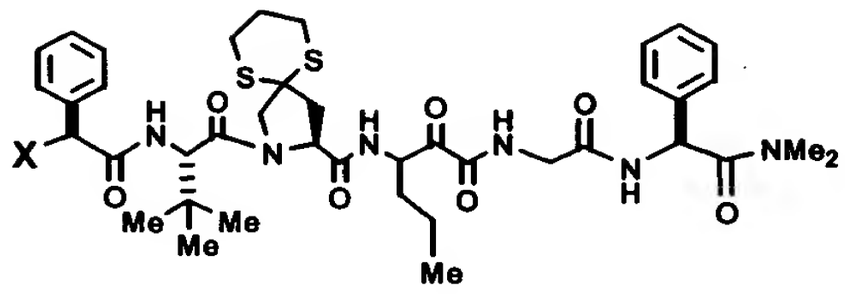


(X = O^tBu)
(X = OH)
(X = NH_2)
(X = NMe_2)
(X = NMeOMe)

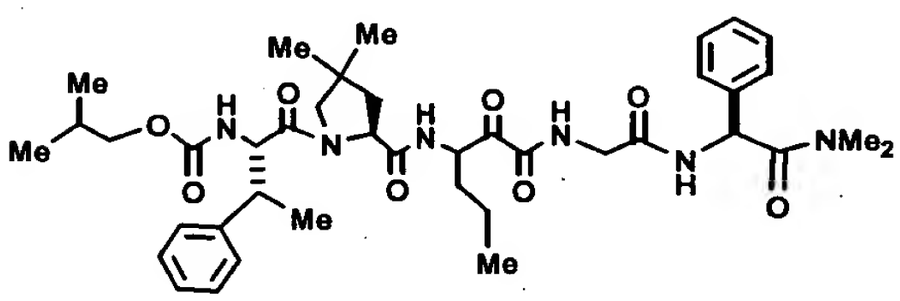


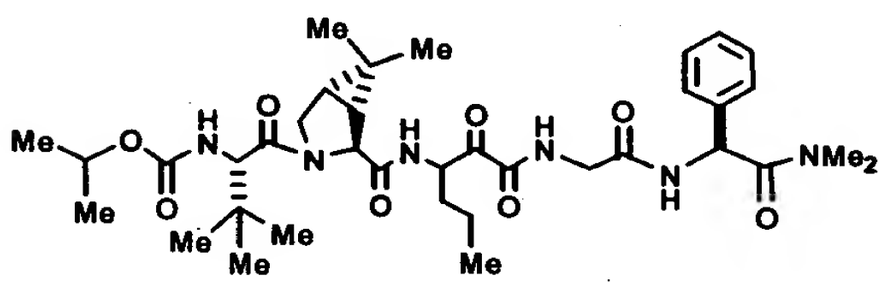
(R = t-butyl)
(R = Isobutyl)

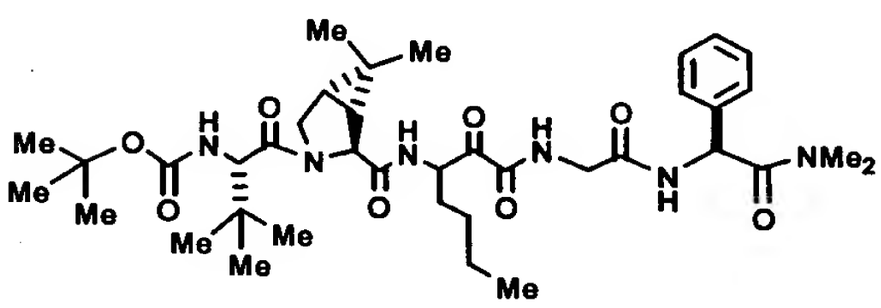


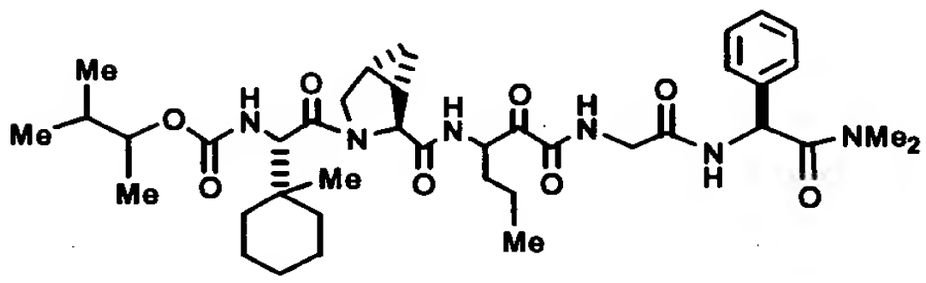


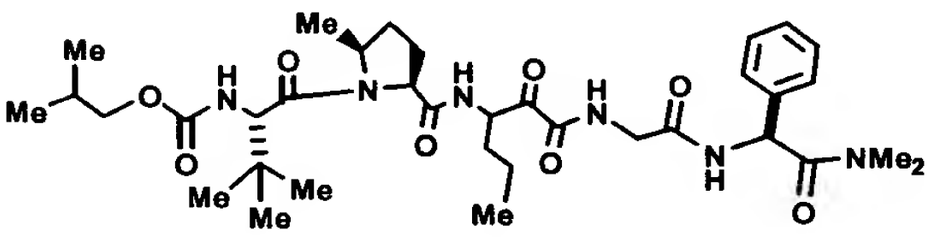
(X = Me, Y = CH_2Me)
(X = OAc, Y = Me)

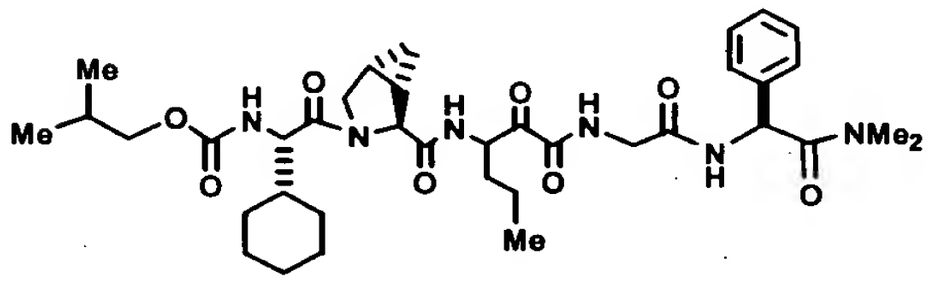


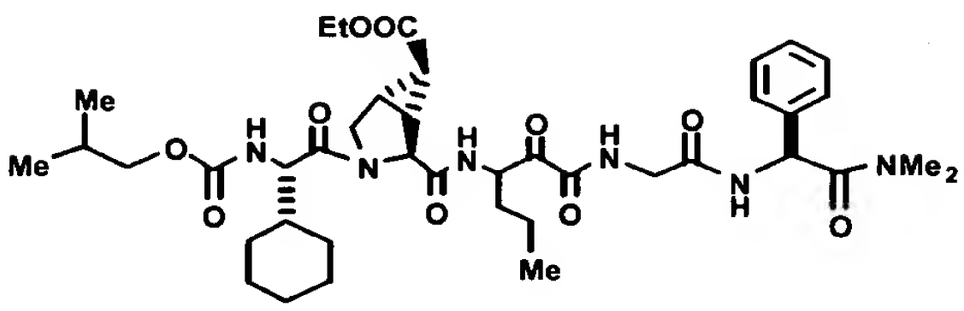


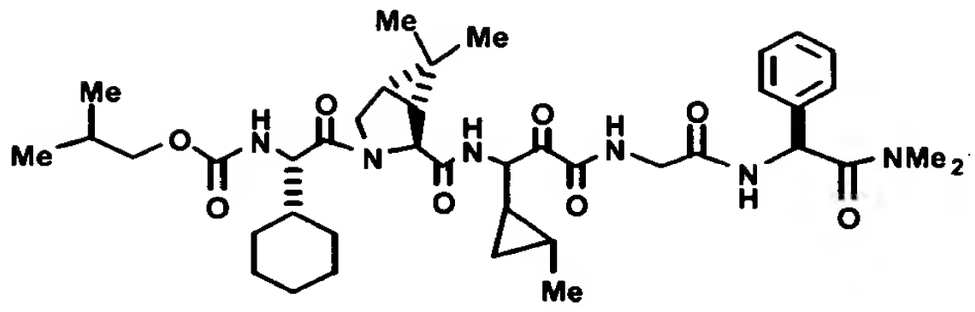


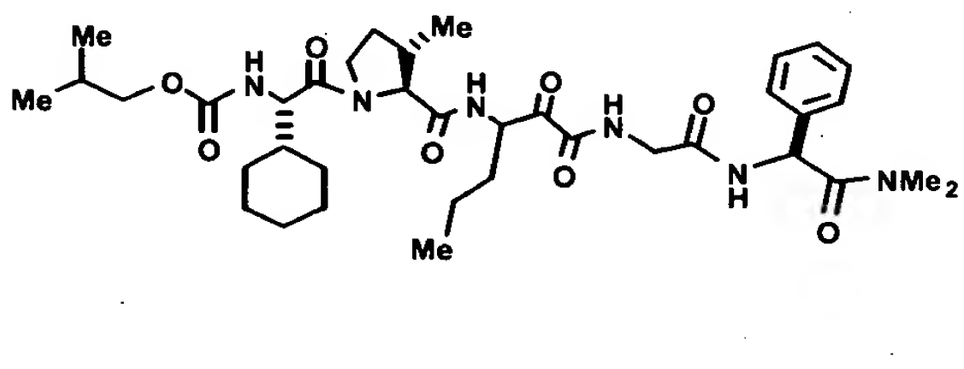


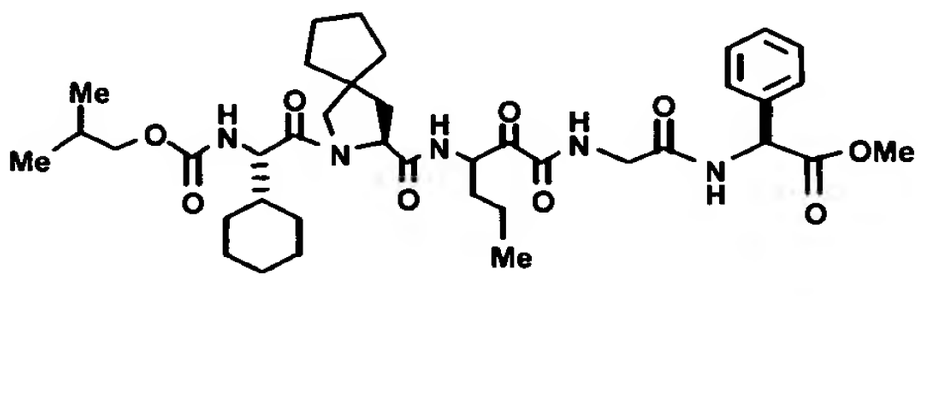


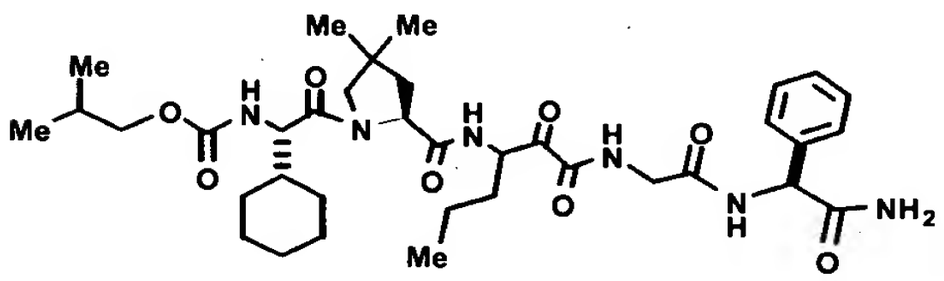


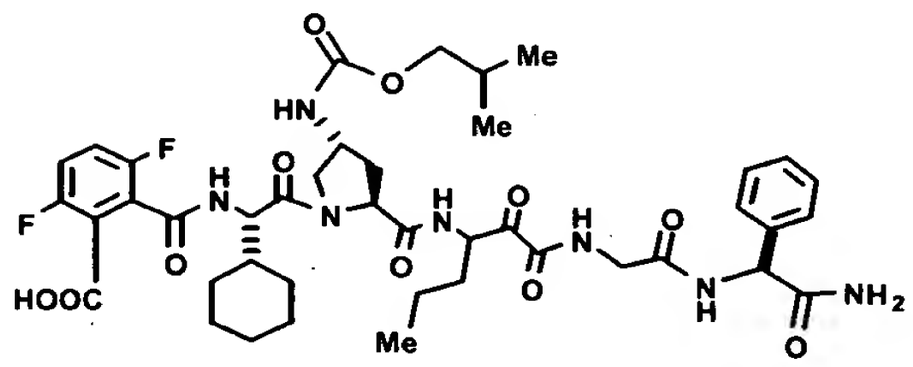


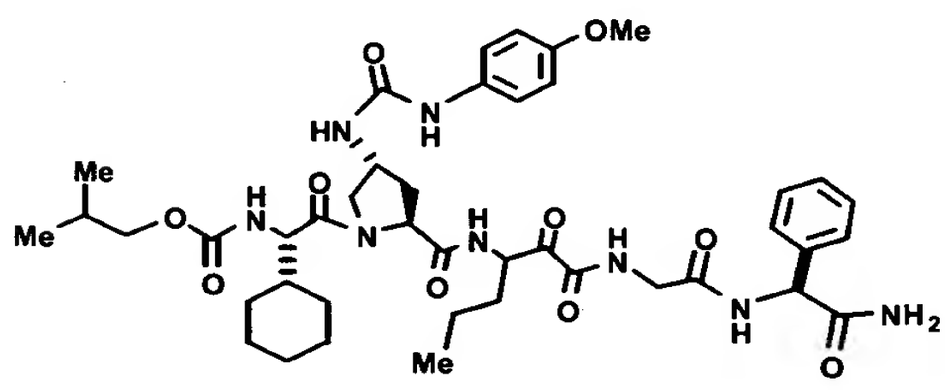


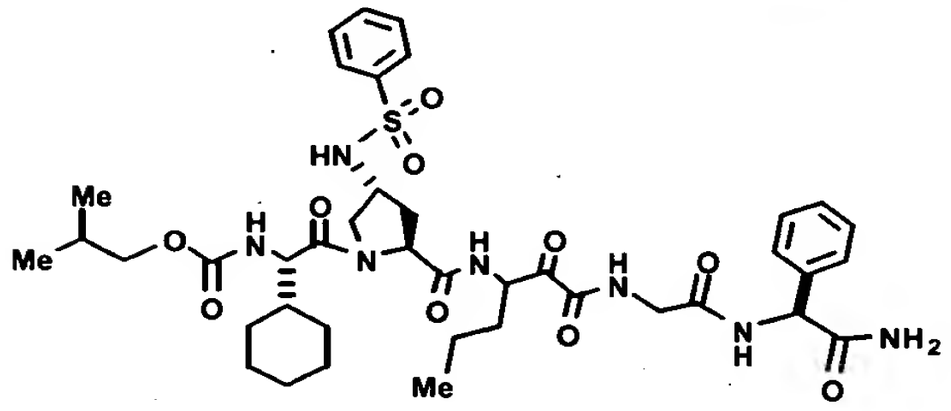


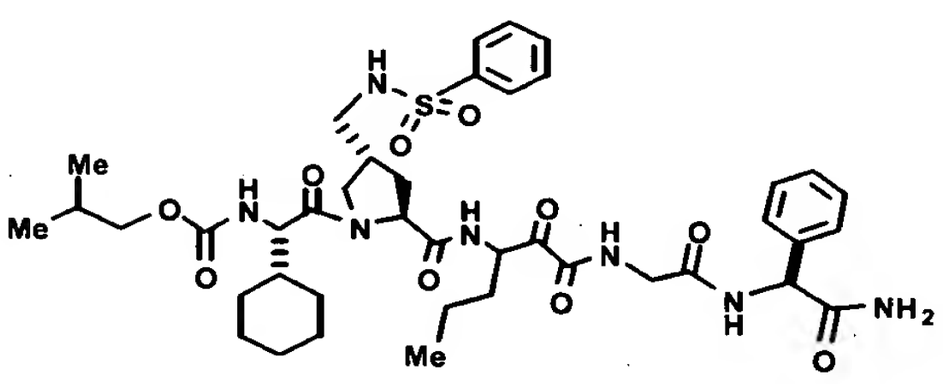


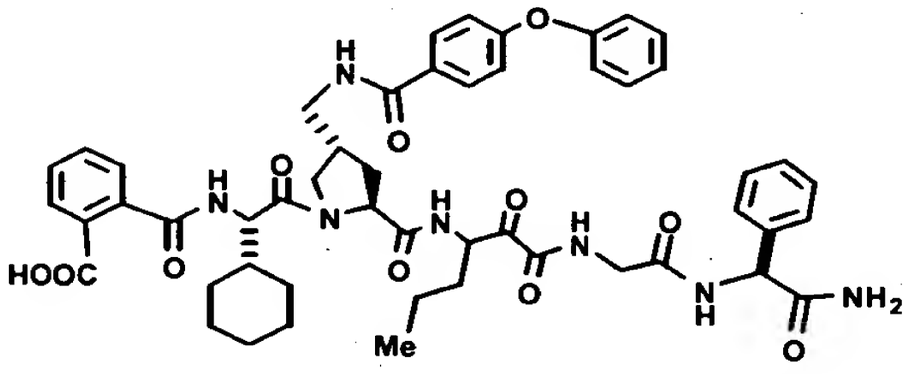


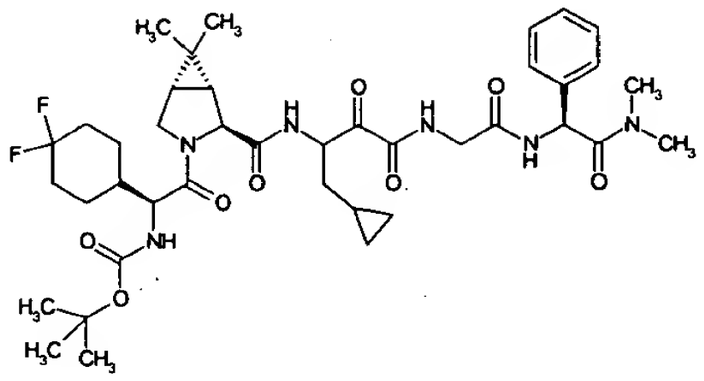


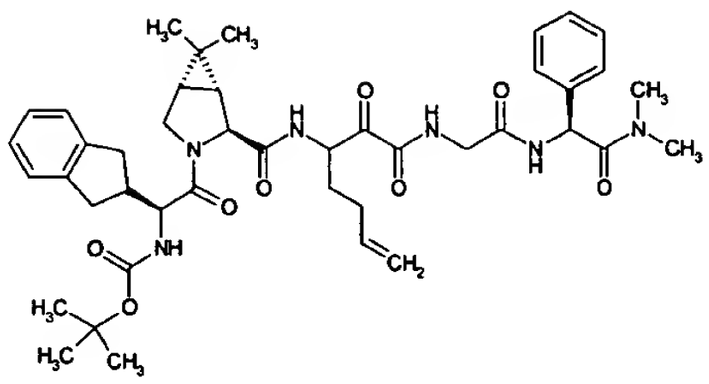


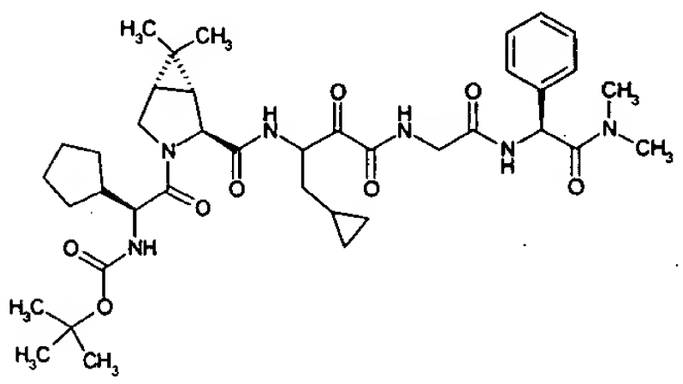


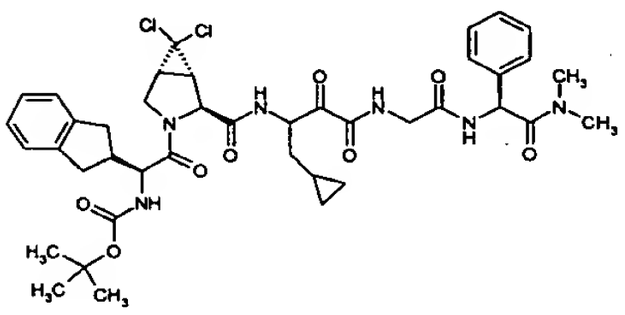


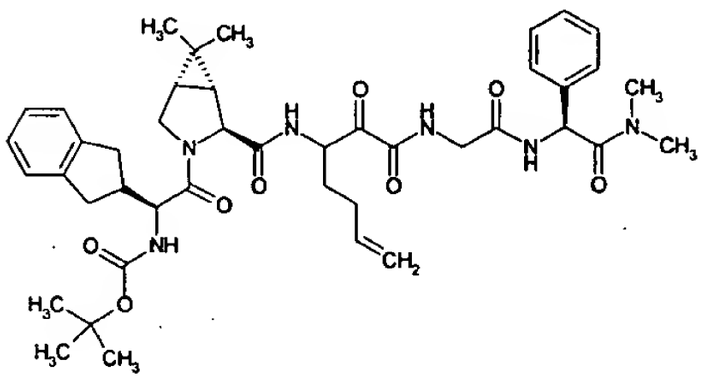


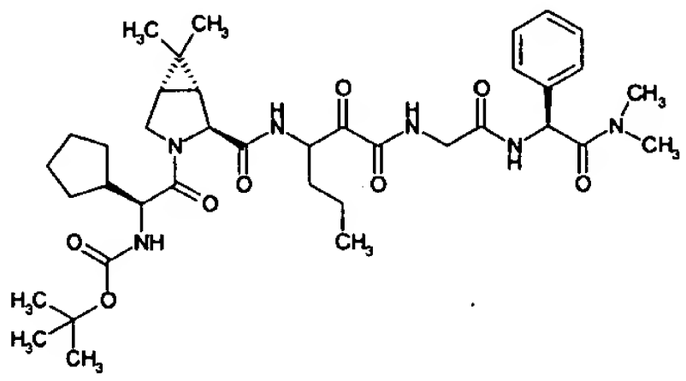


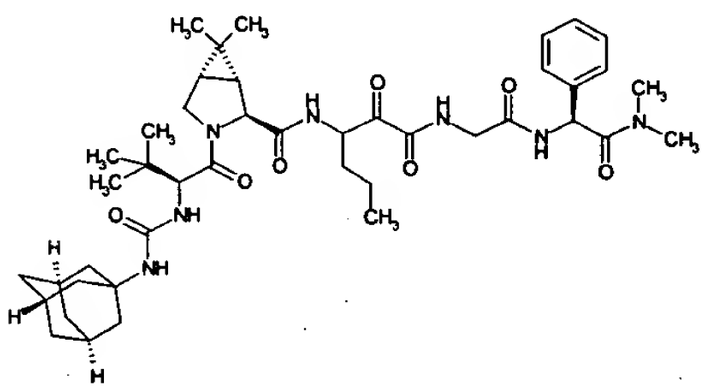


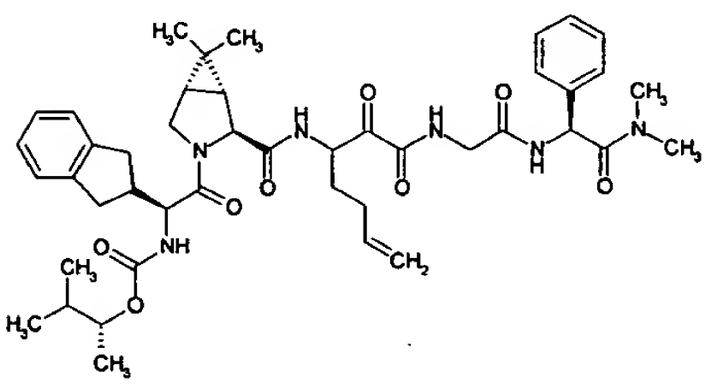


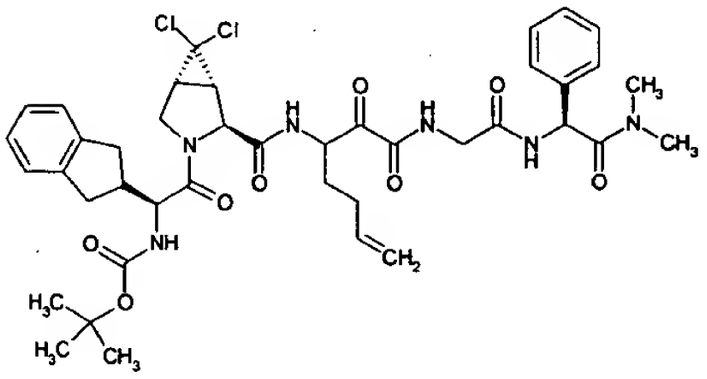


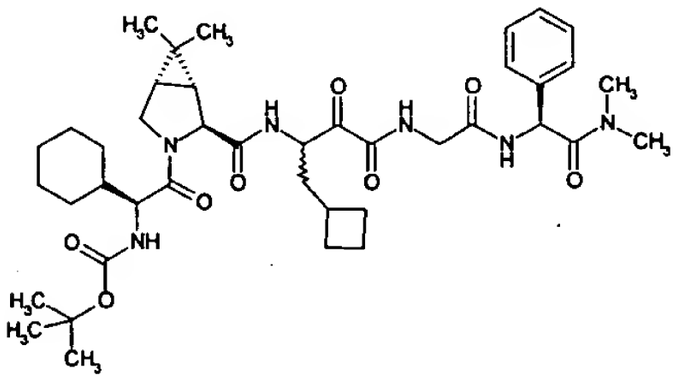


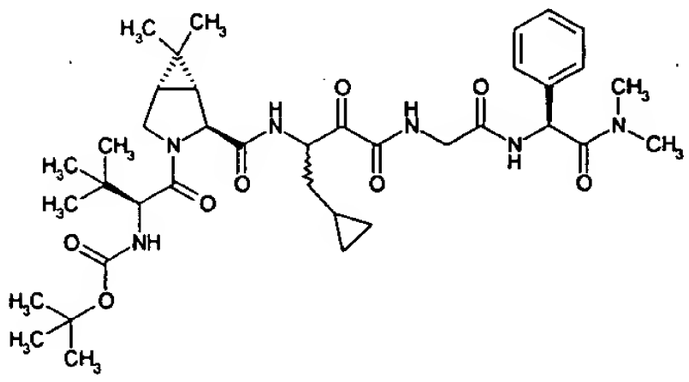


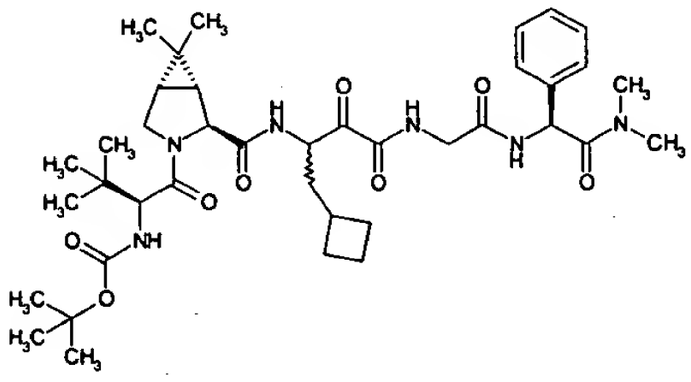


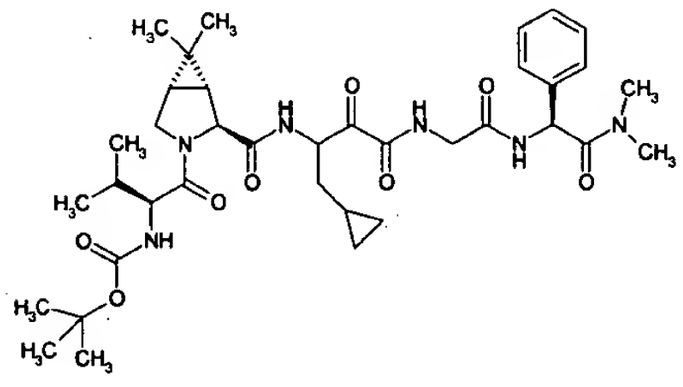


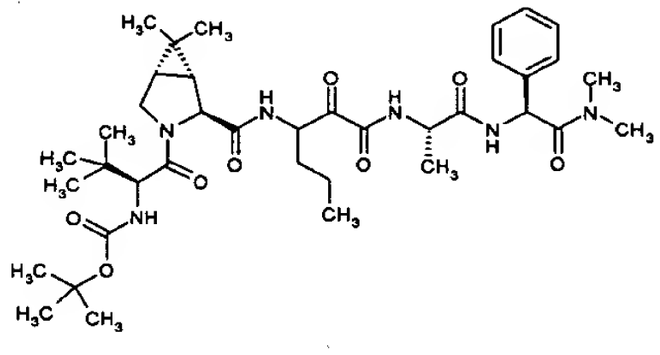


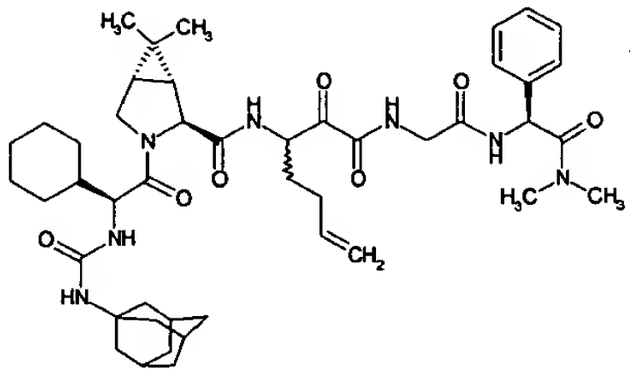


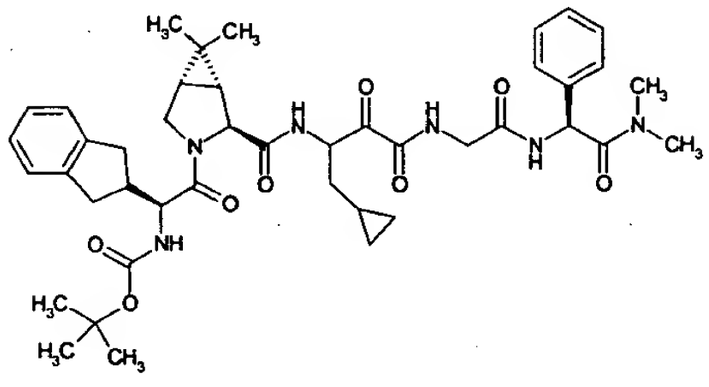


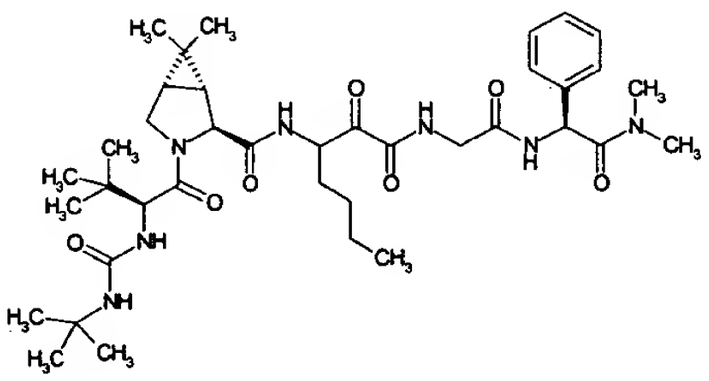


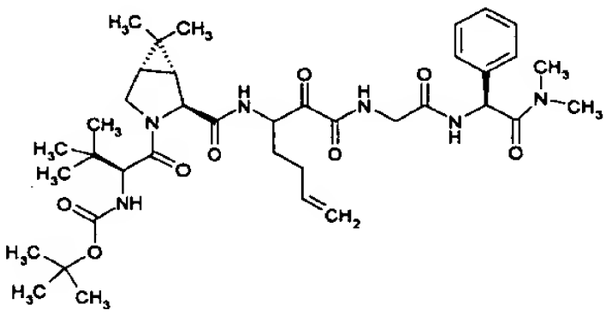


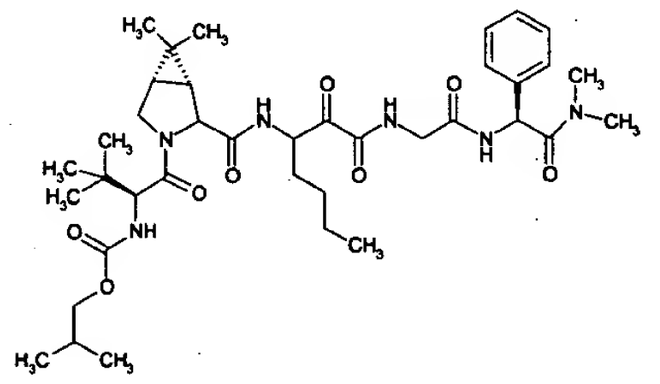


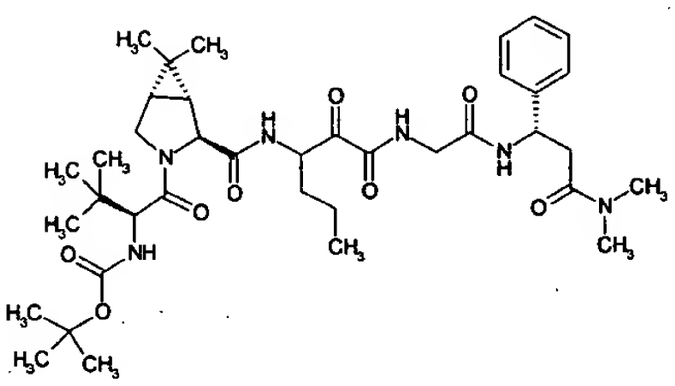


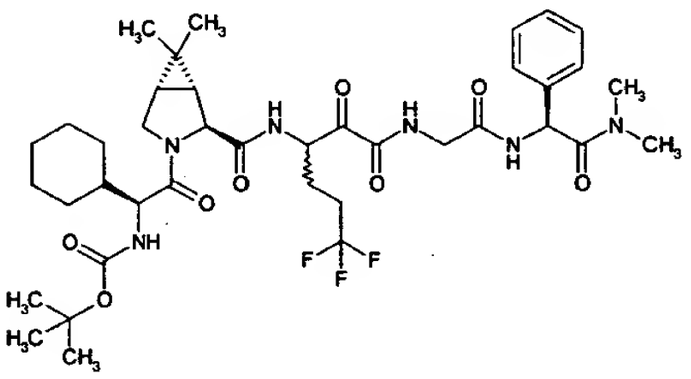


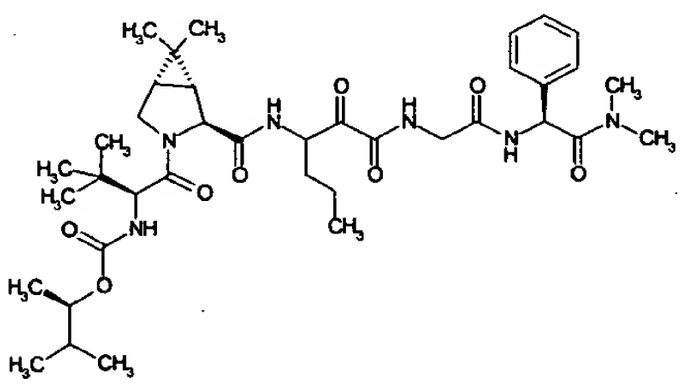


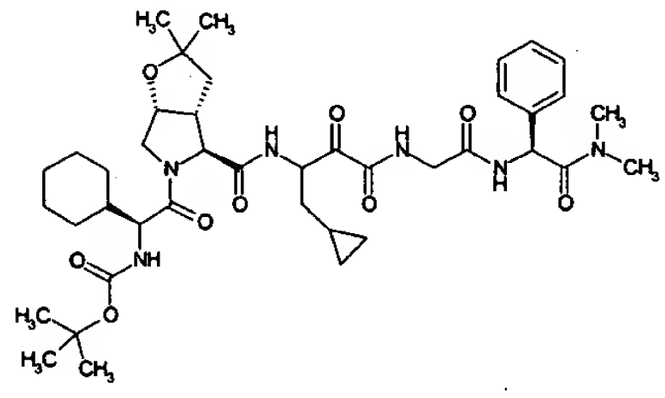


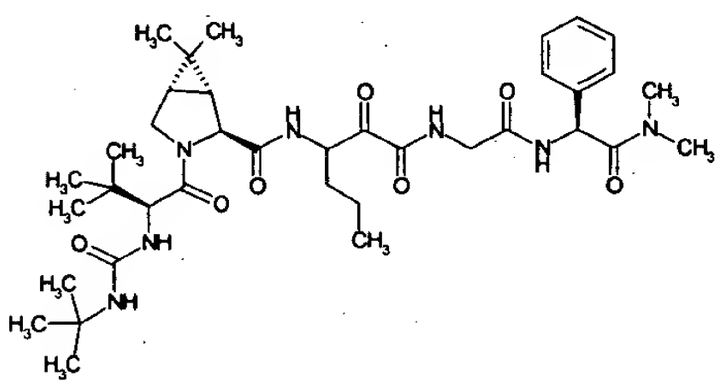


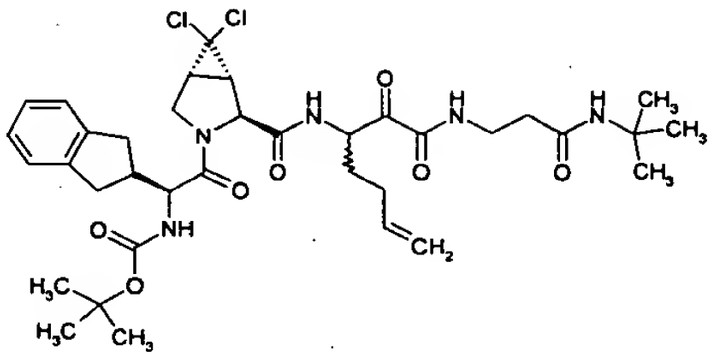


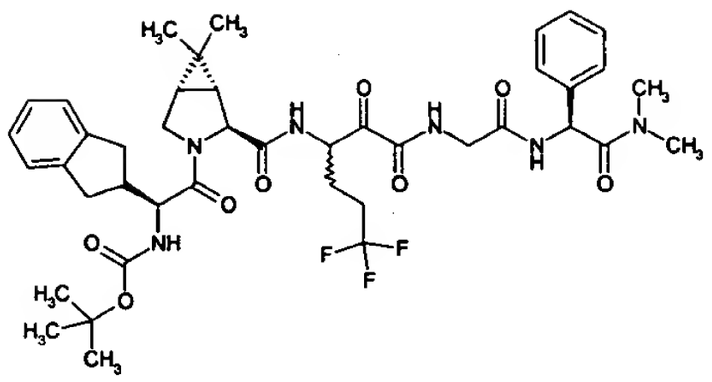


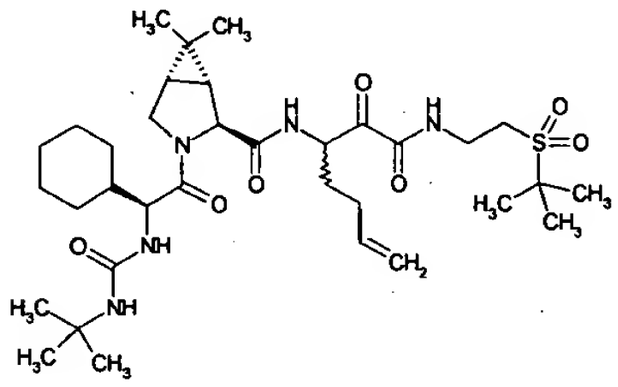


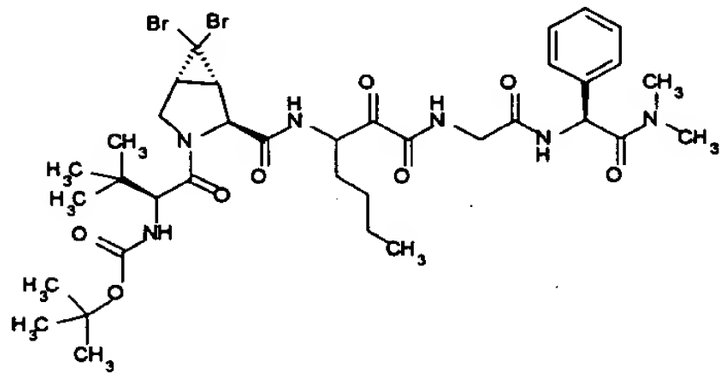


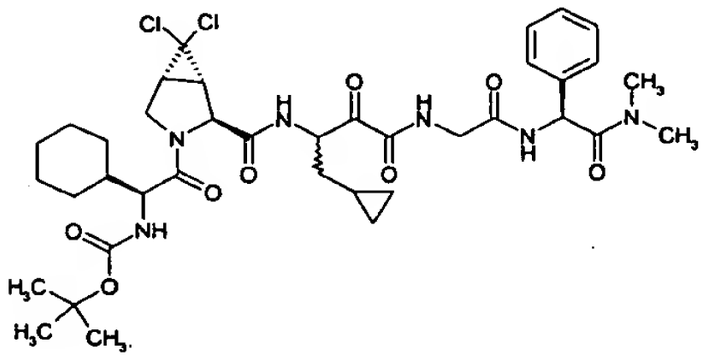


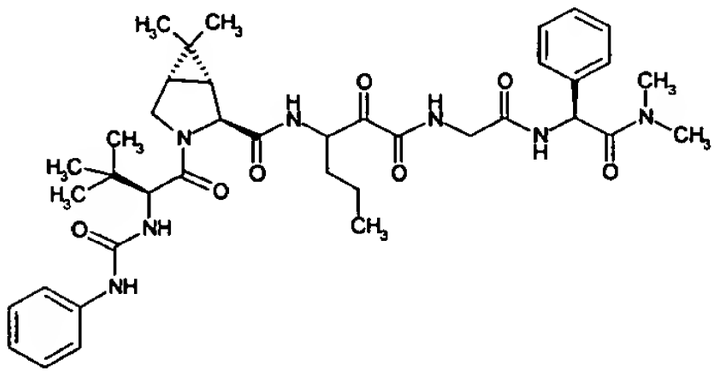


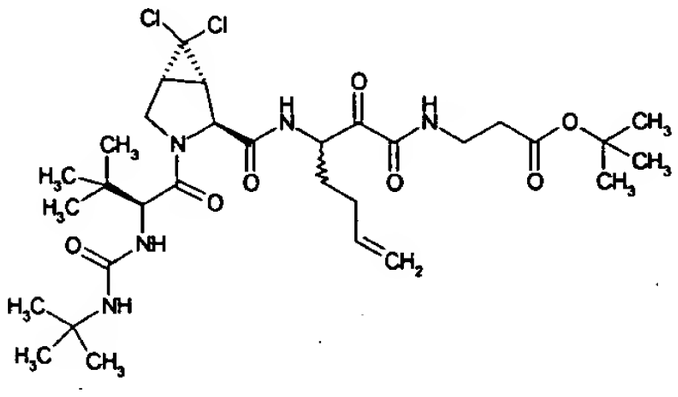


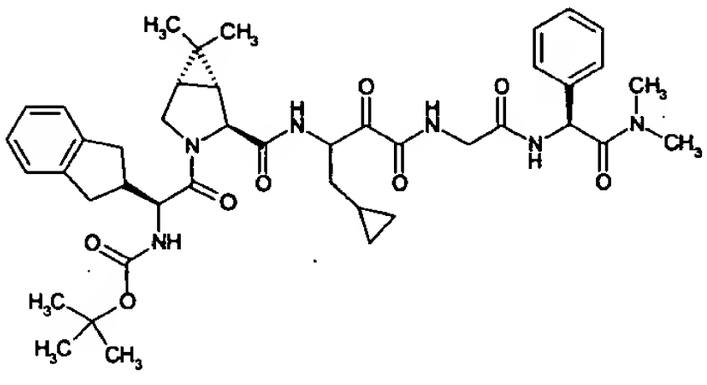


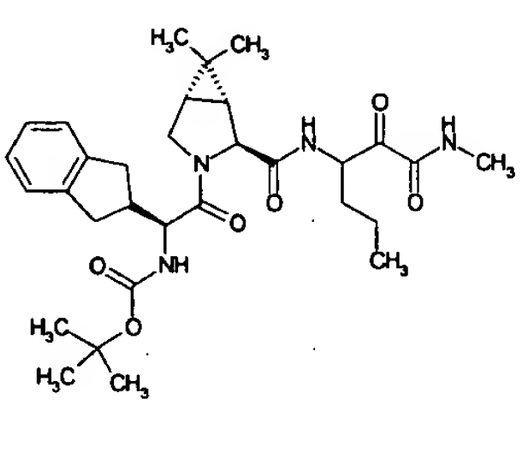


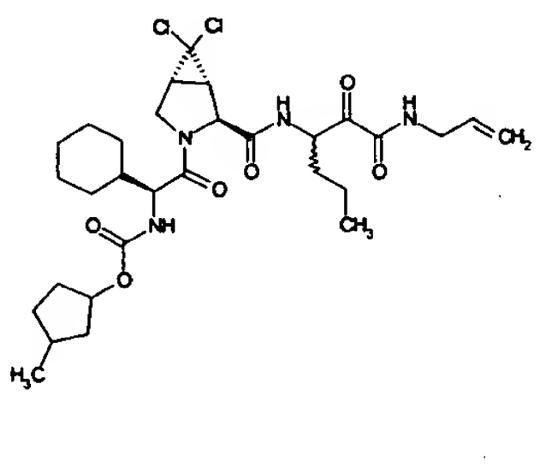


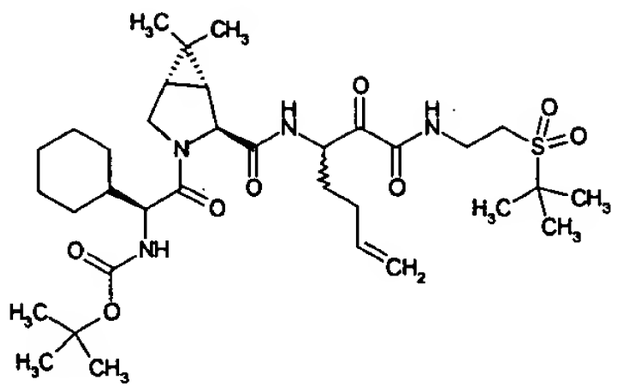


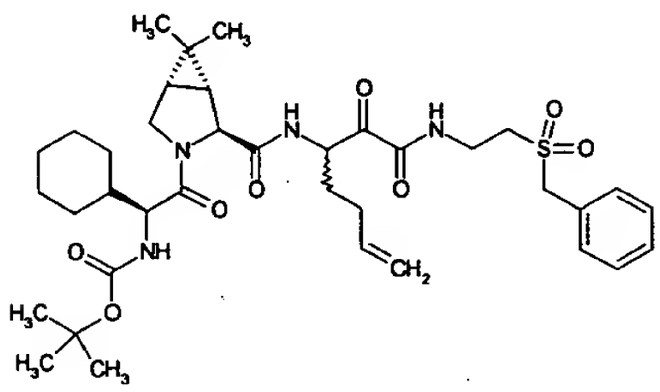


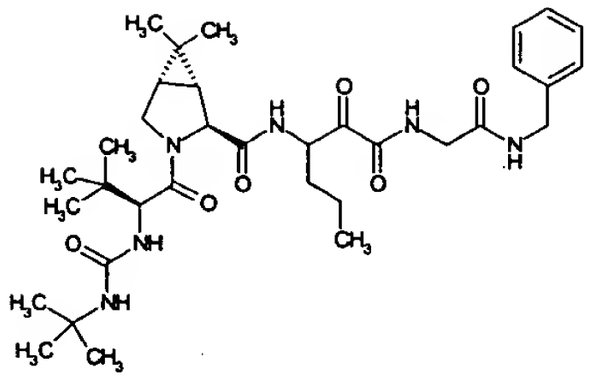


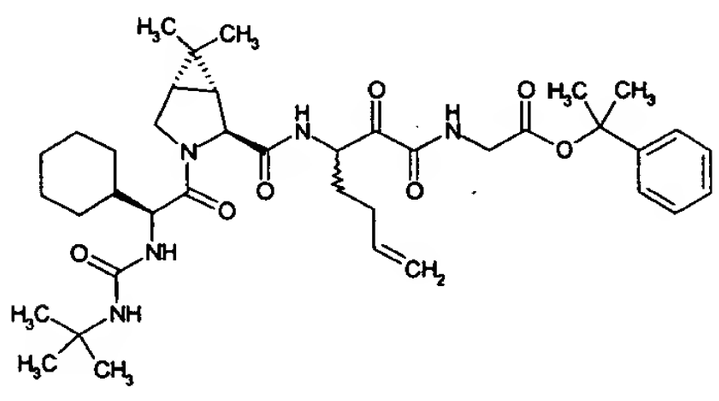


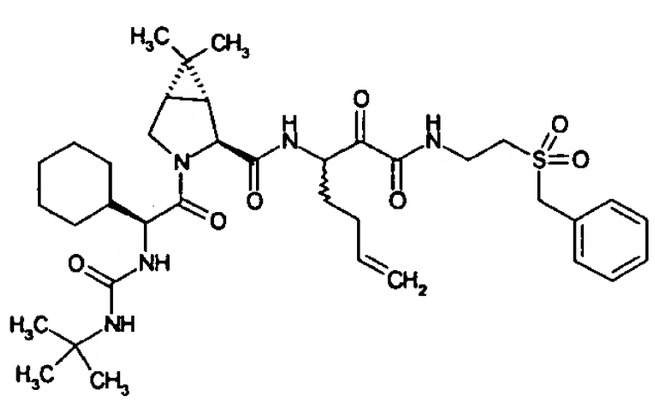


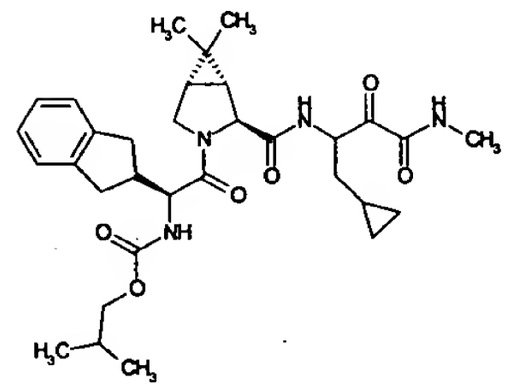


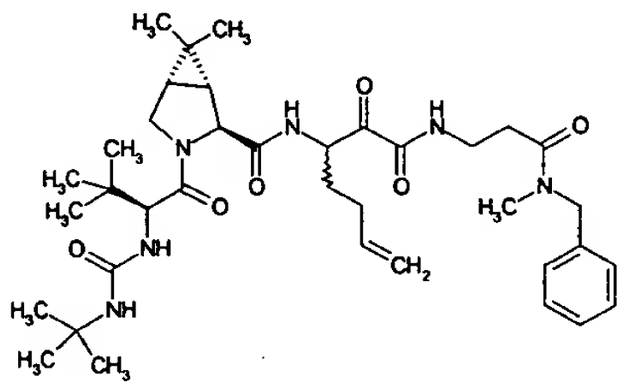


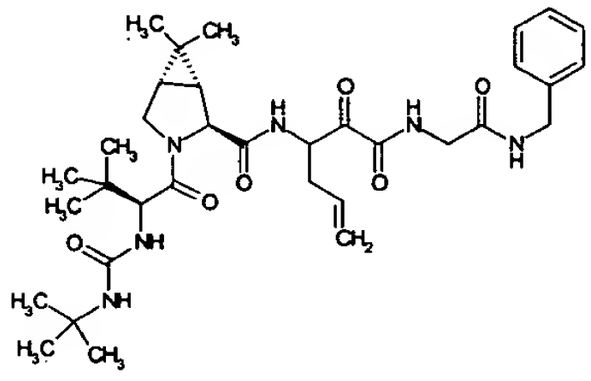


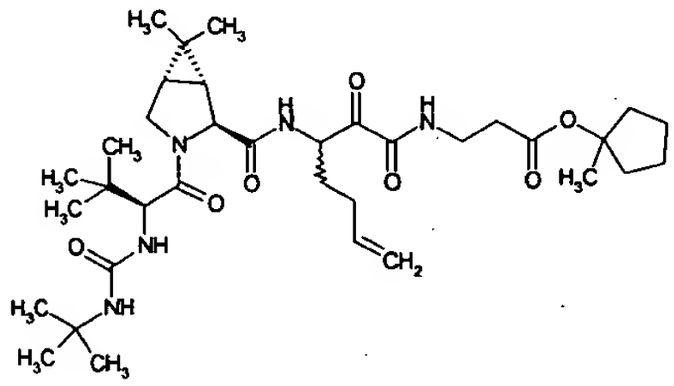


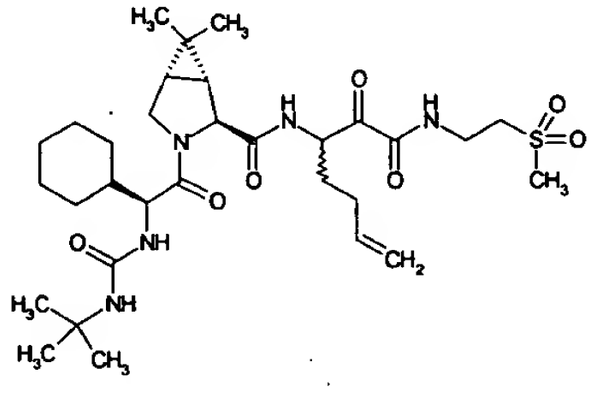


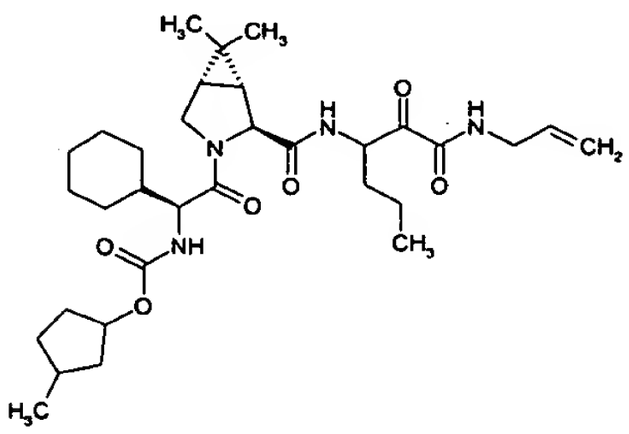


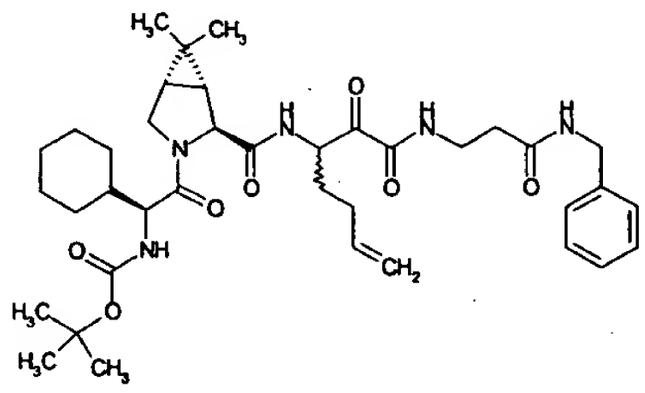


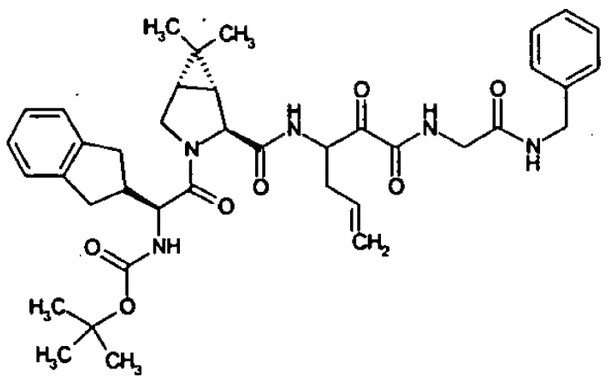


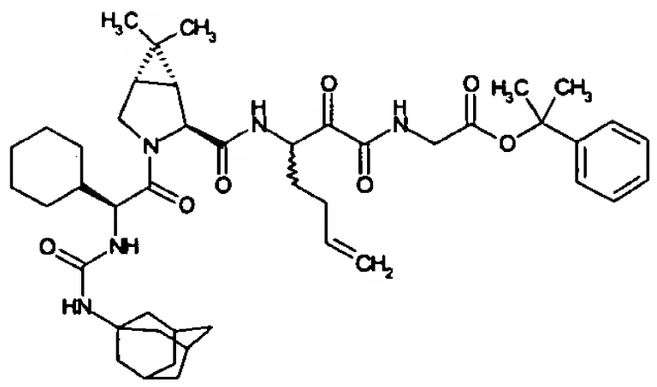


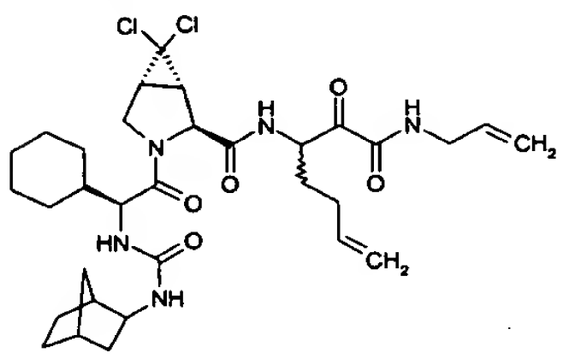


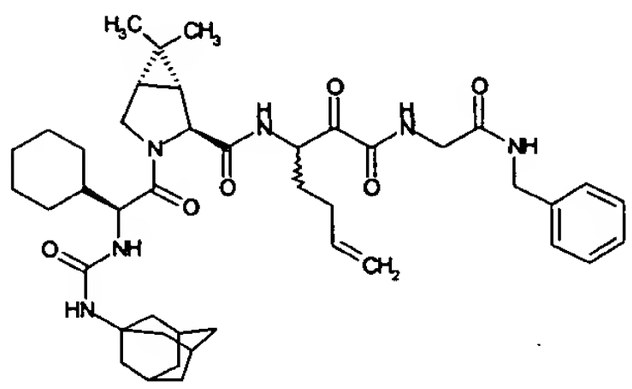


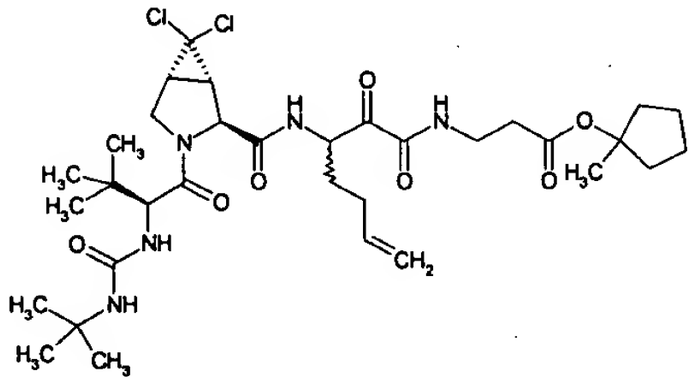


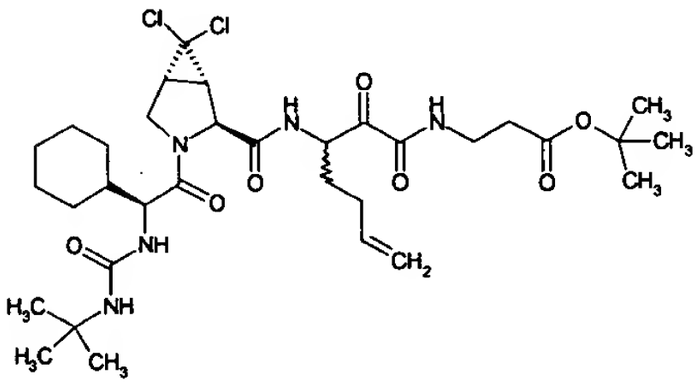


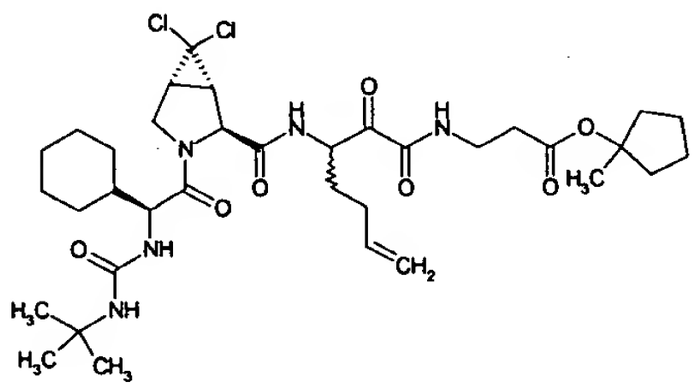


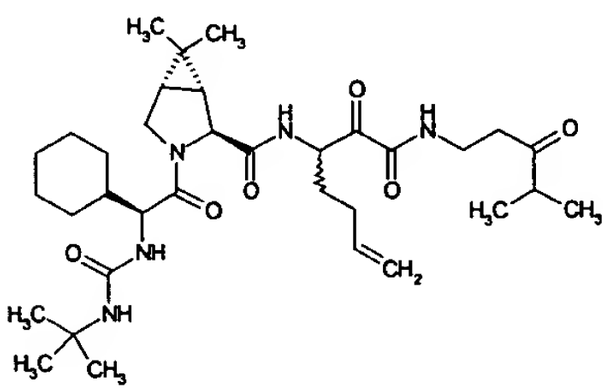


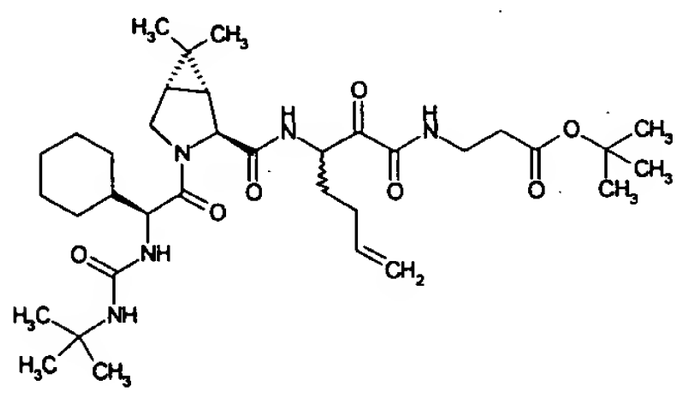


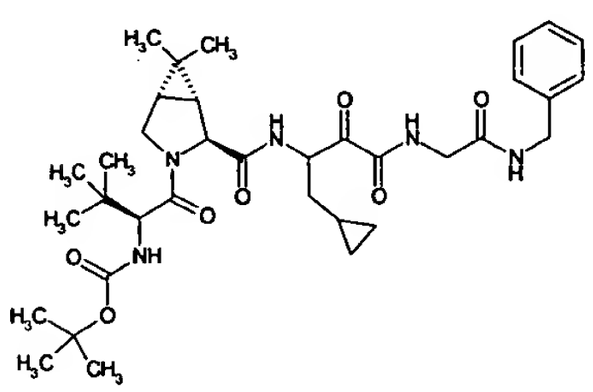


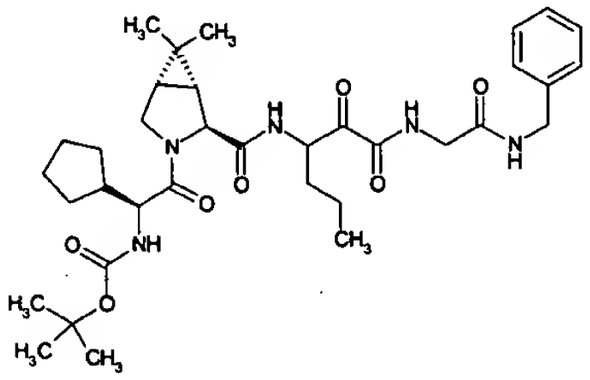


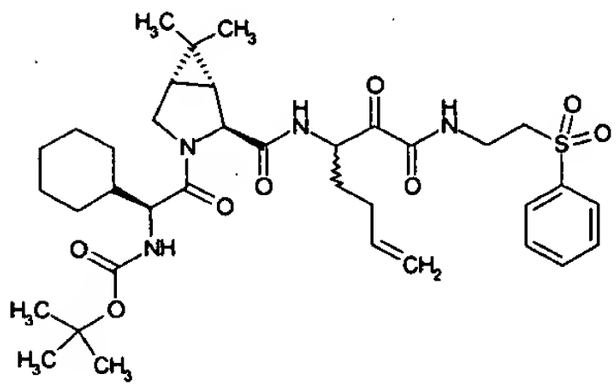


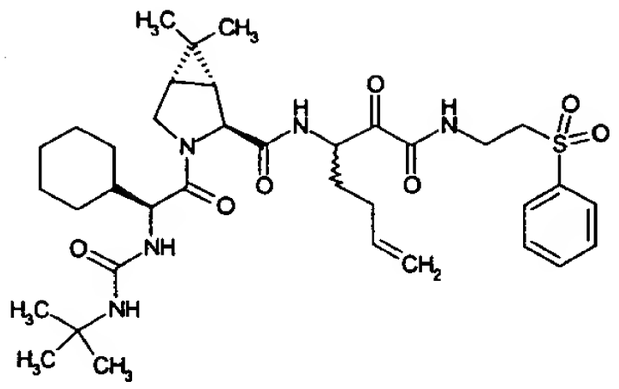


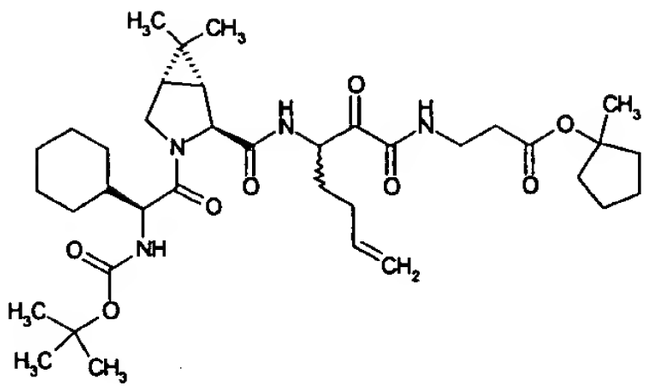


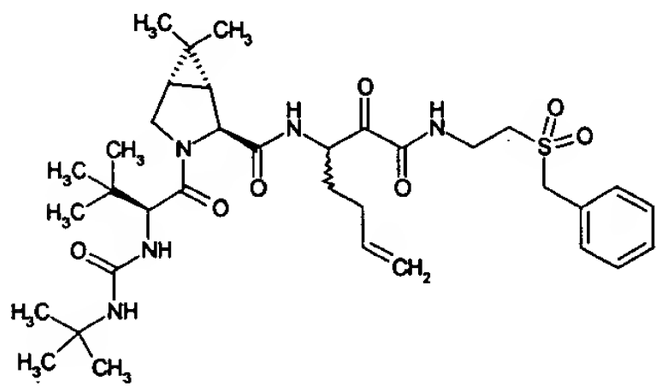


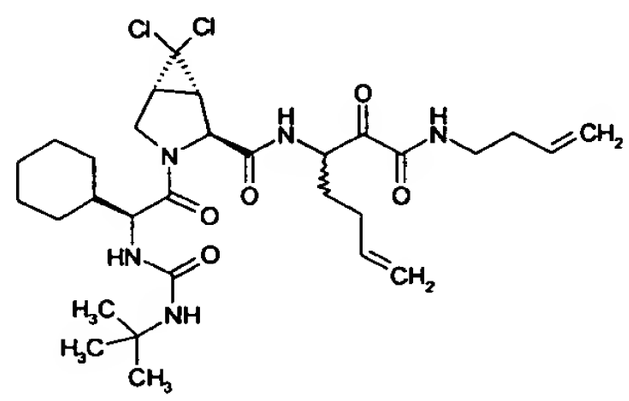


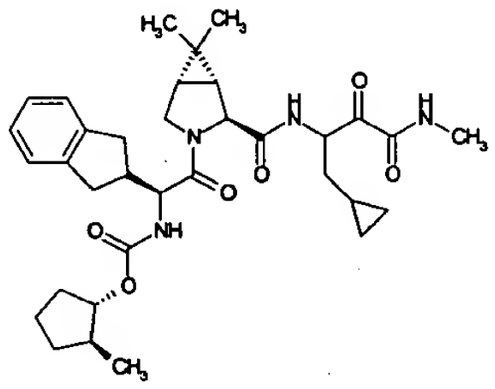


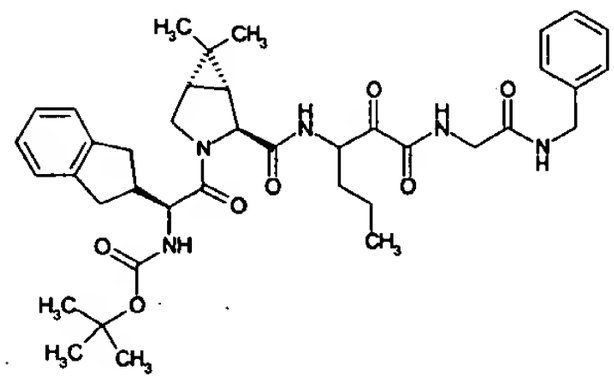


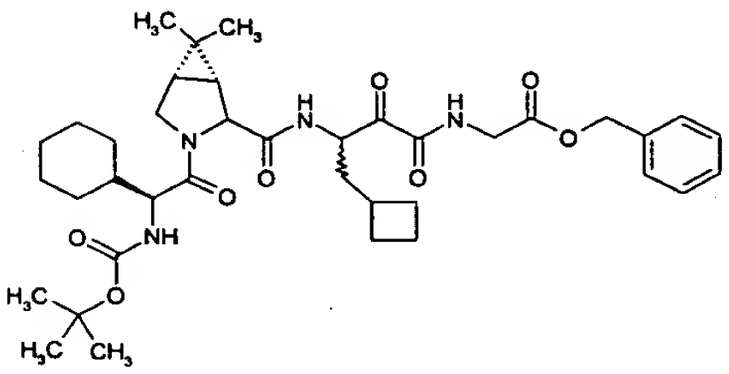


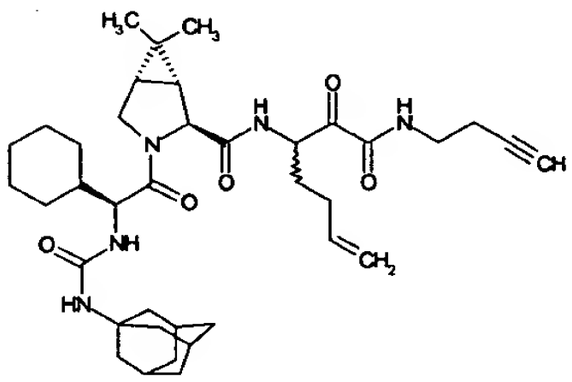


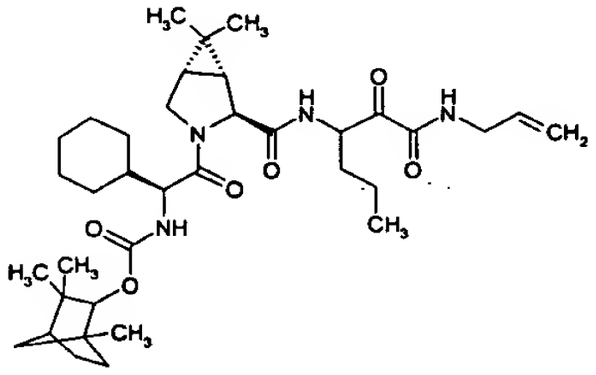


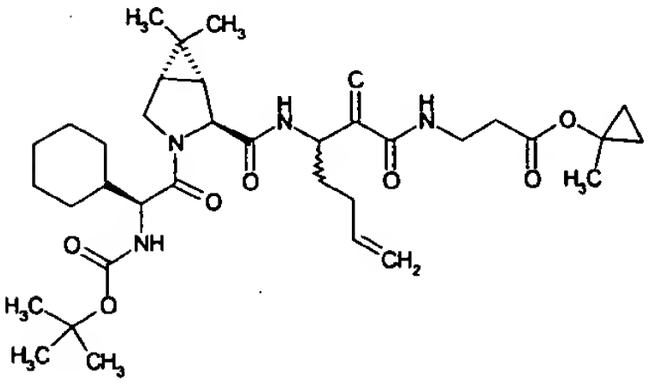


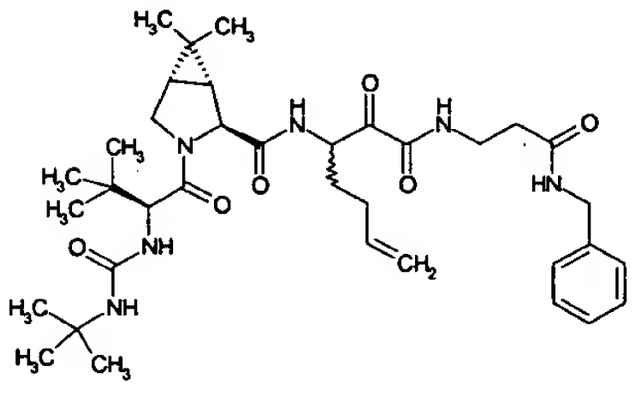


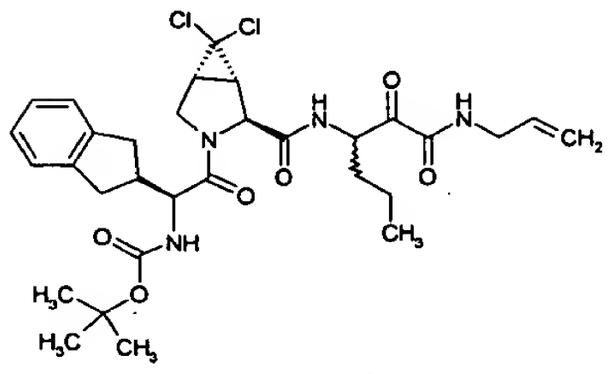


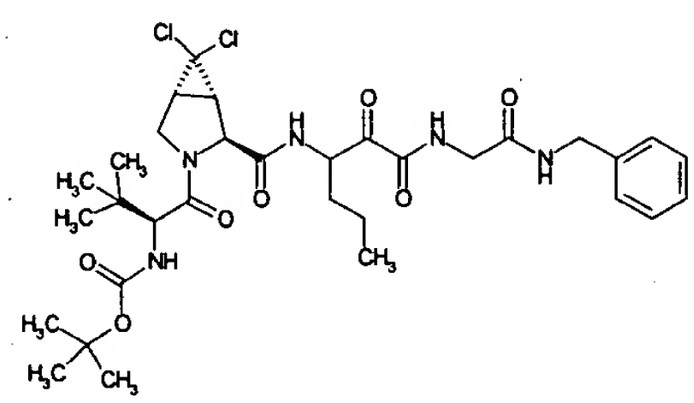


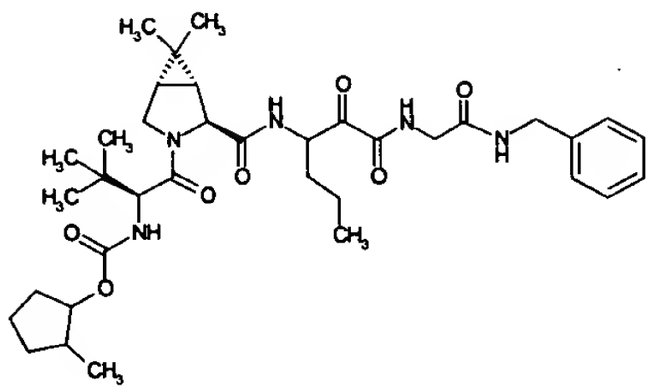


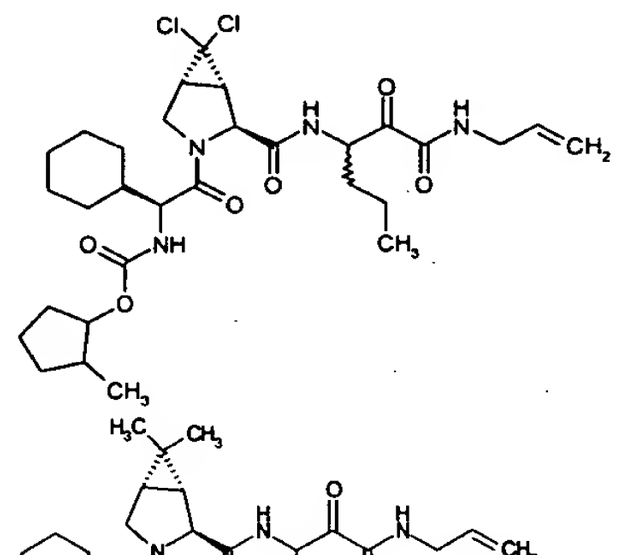


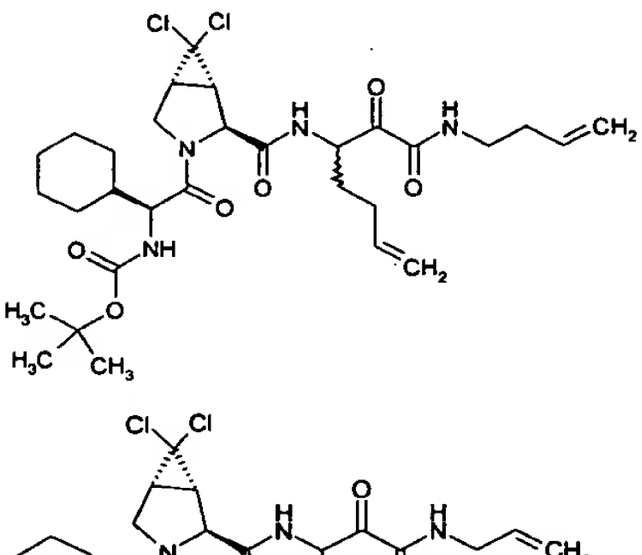


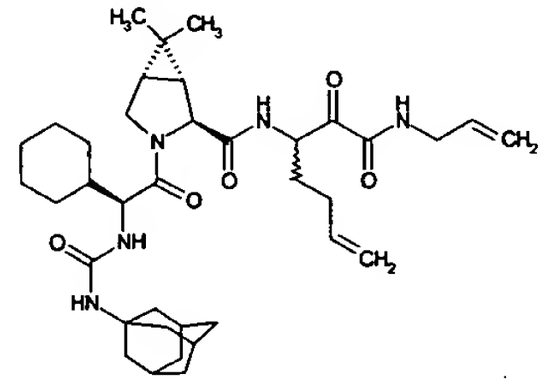


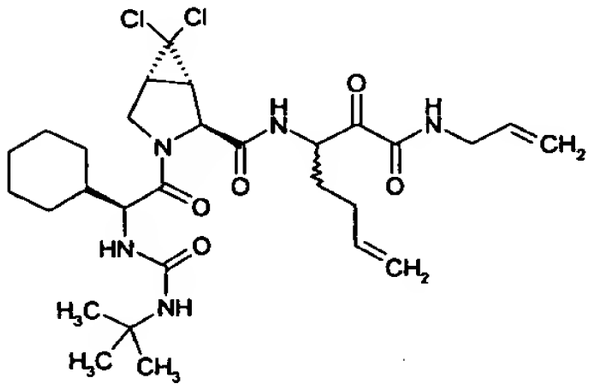


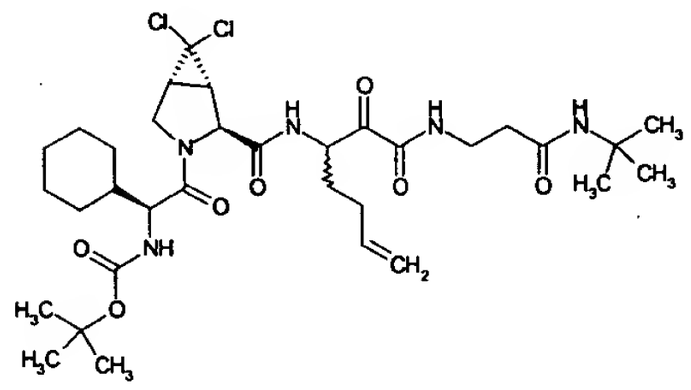


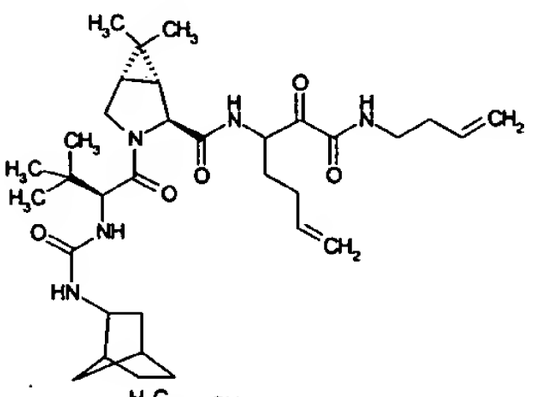


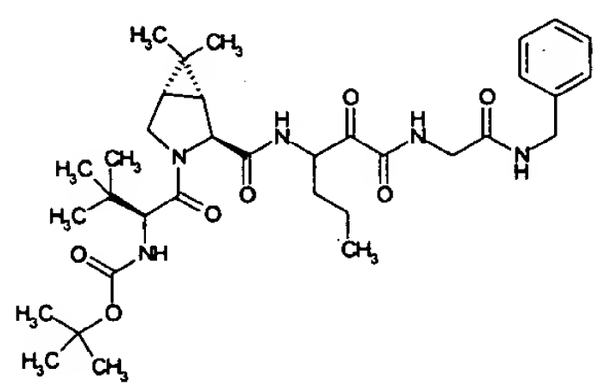


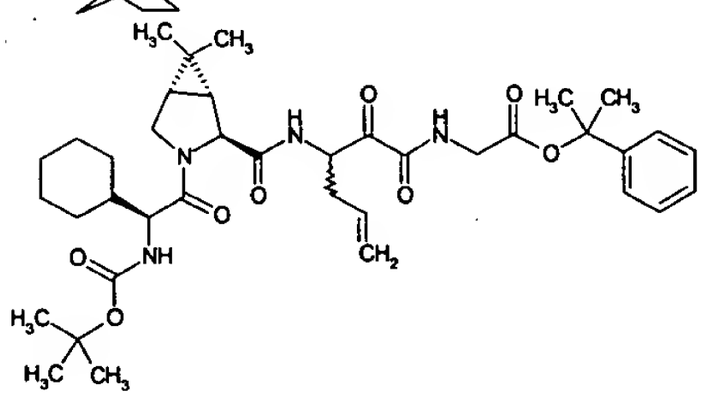


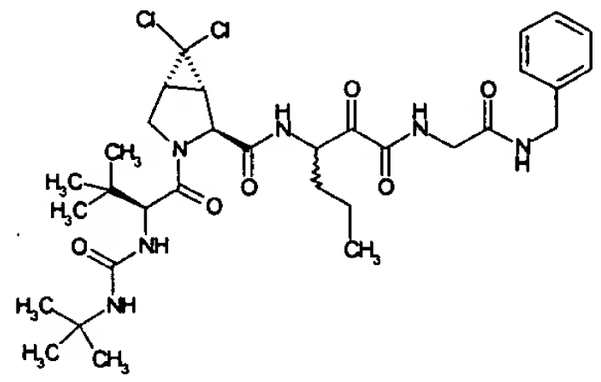


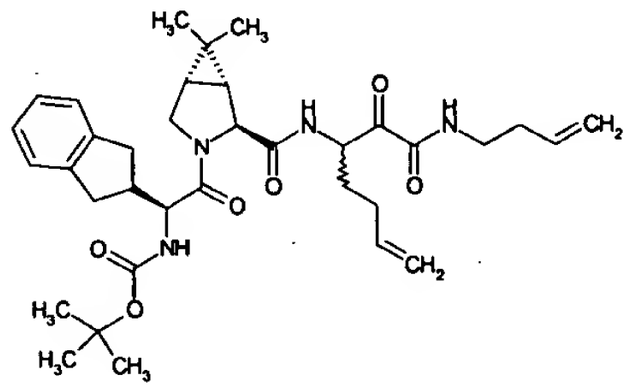


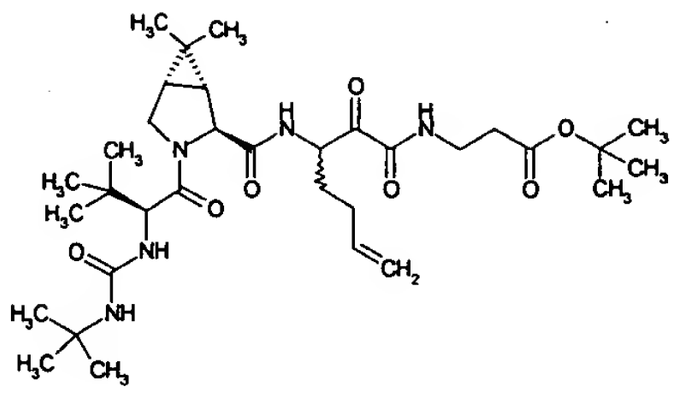


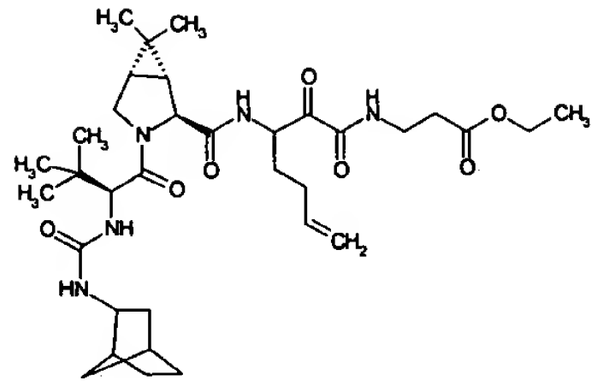


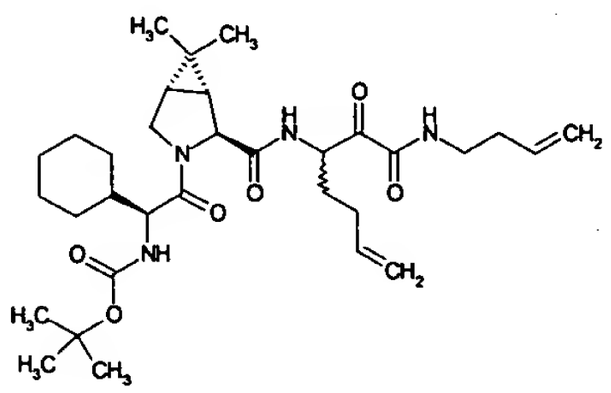


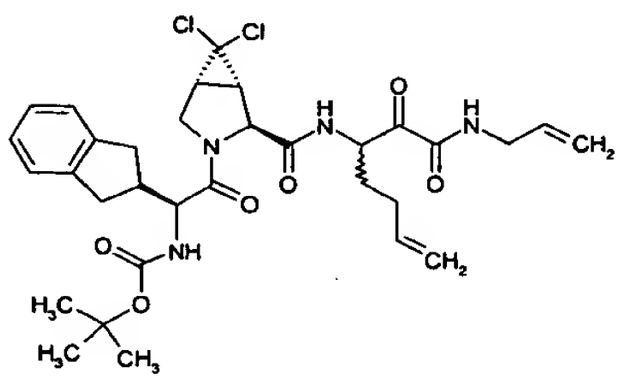


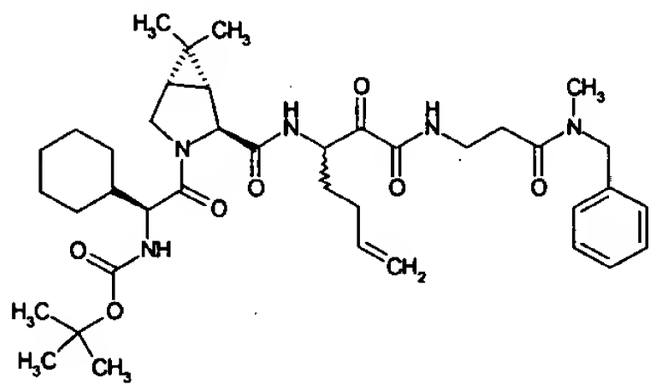


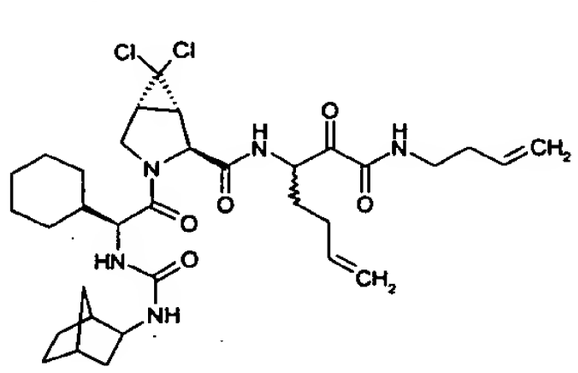


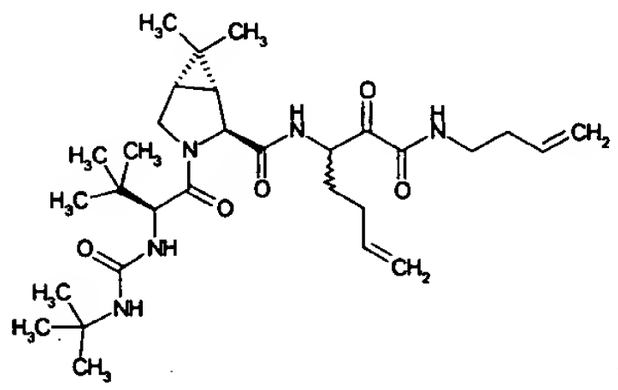


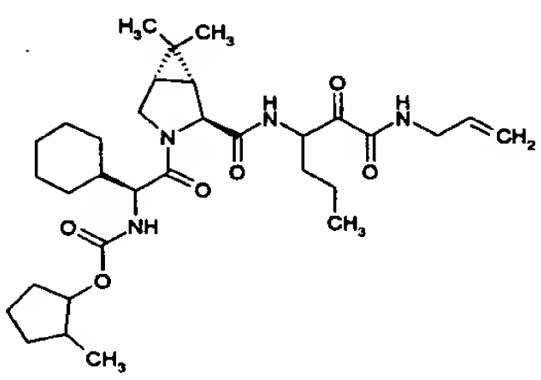


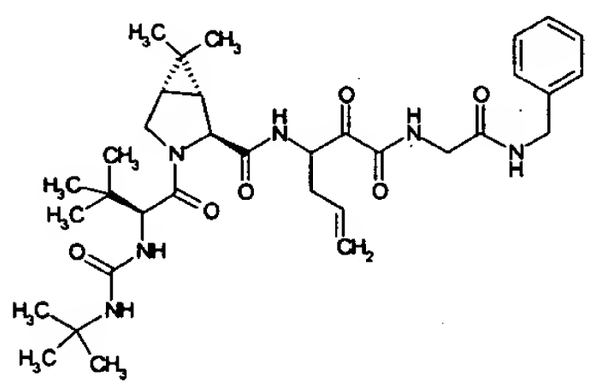


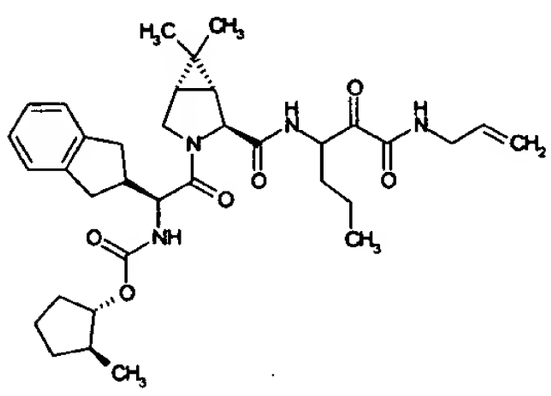


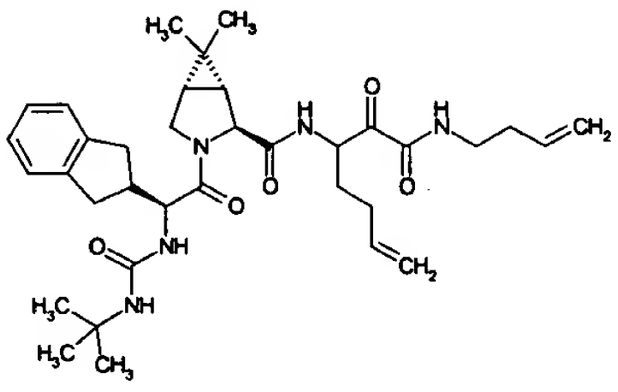


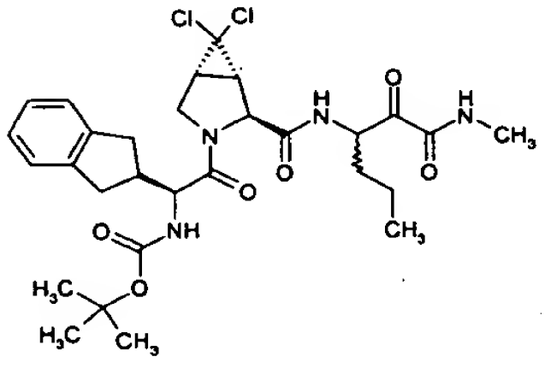


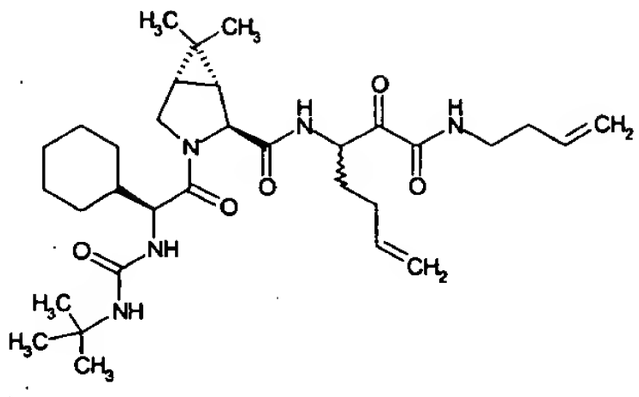


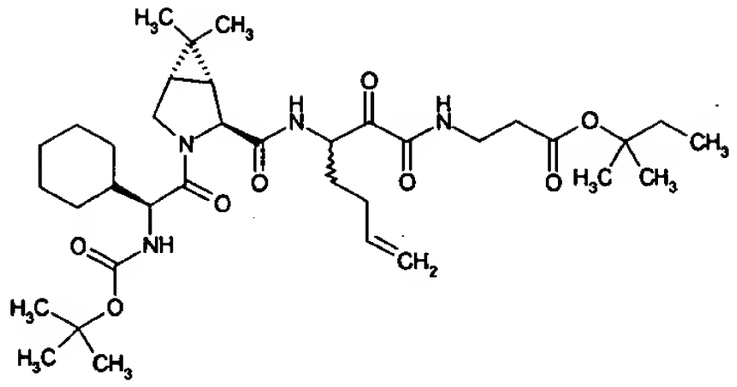


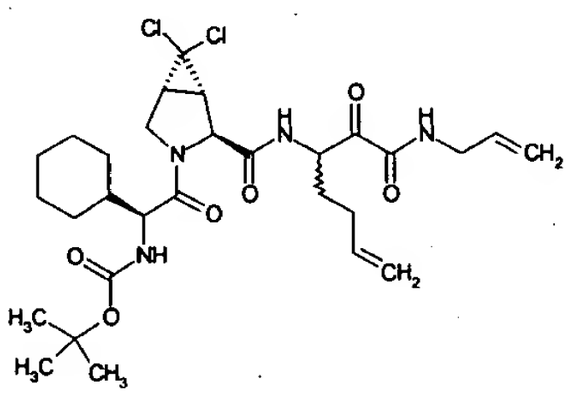


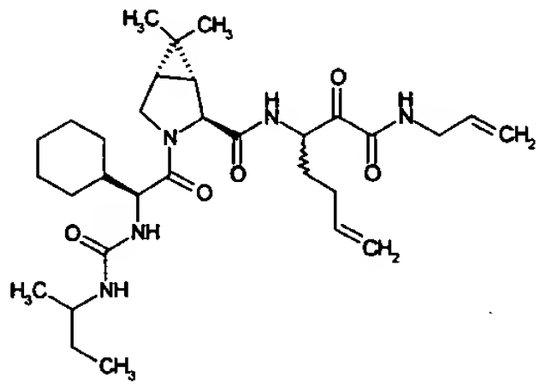


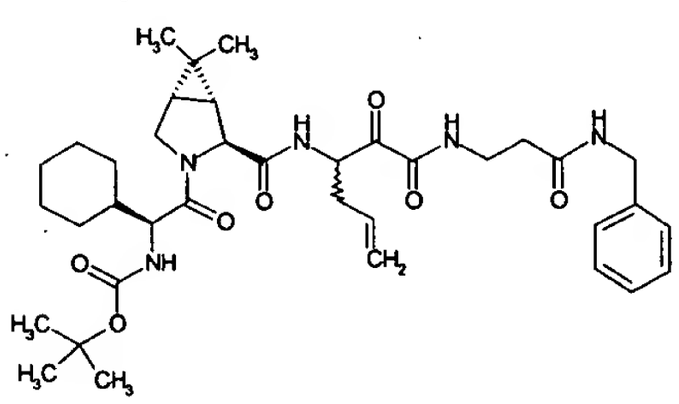


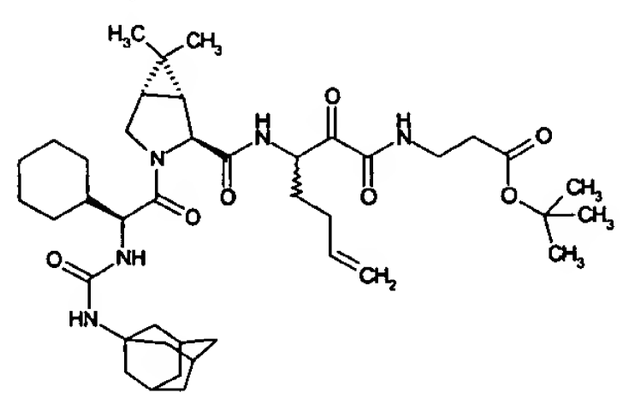


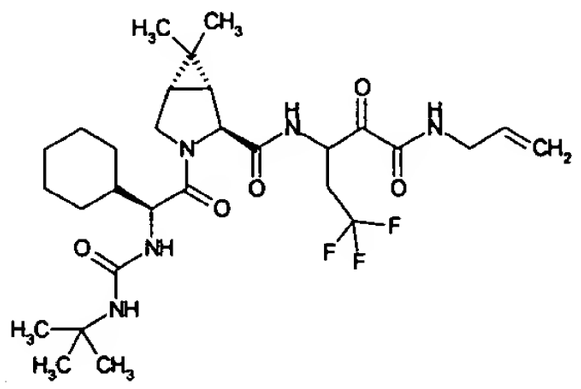


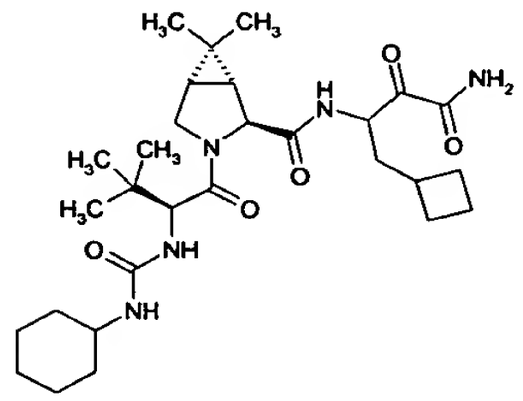


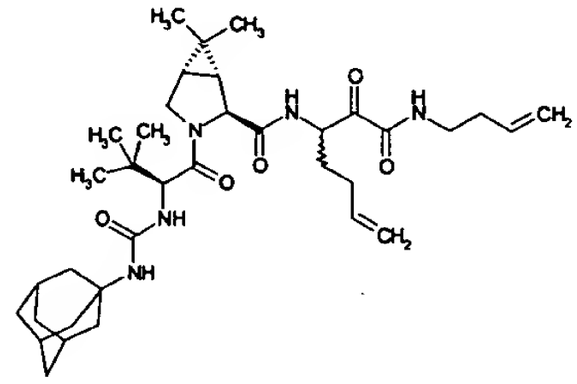


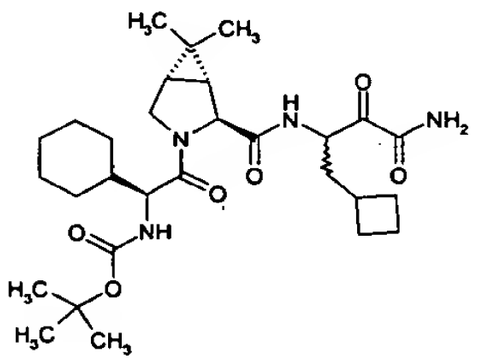


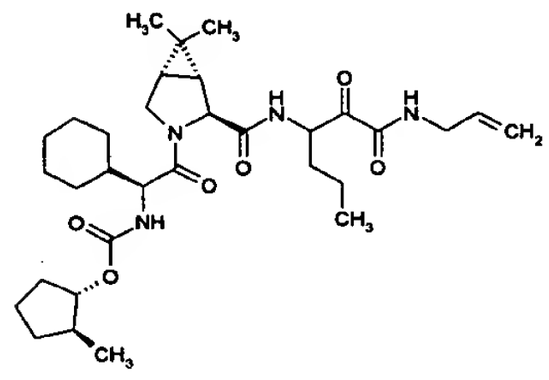


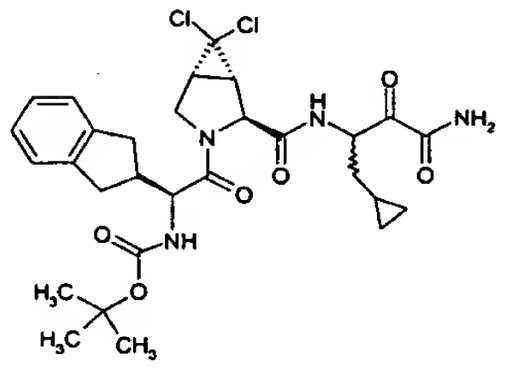


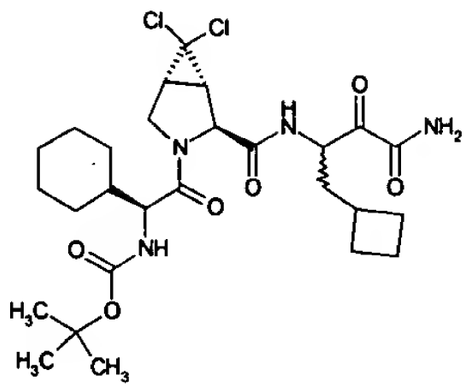


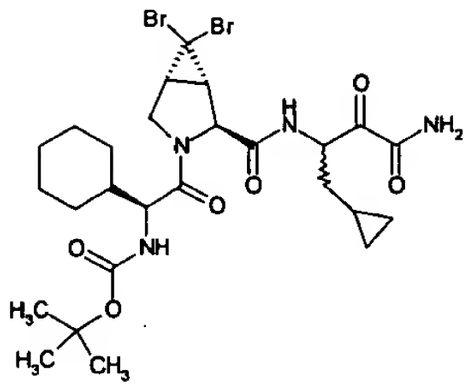


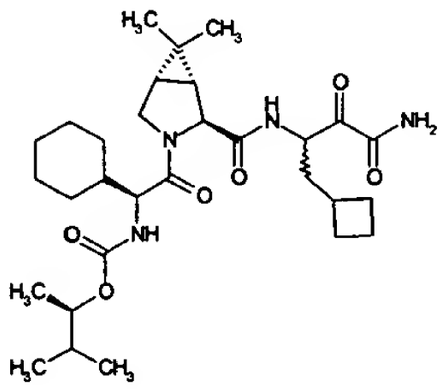


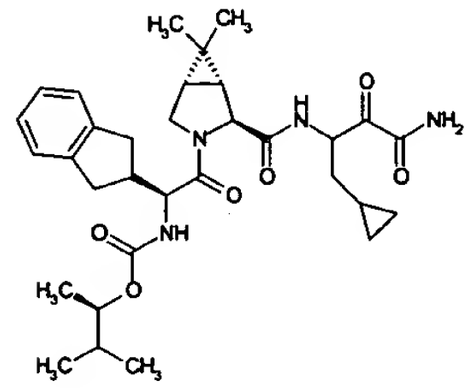


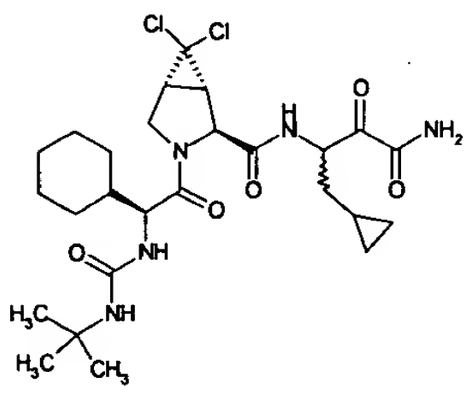


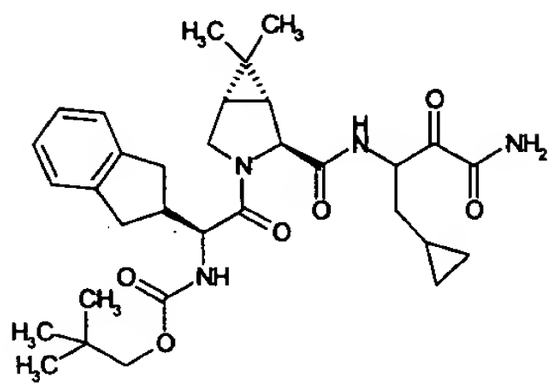


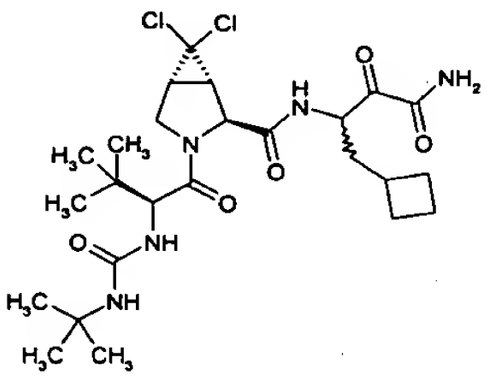


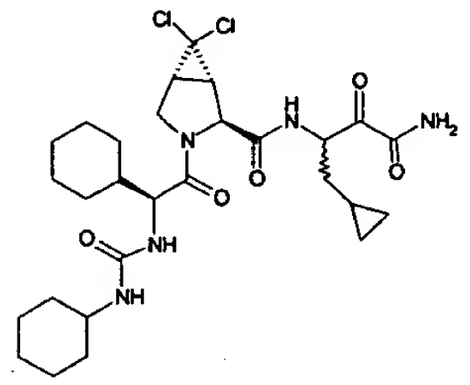


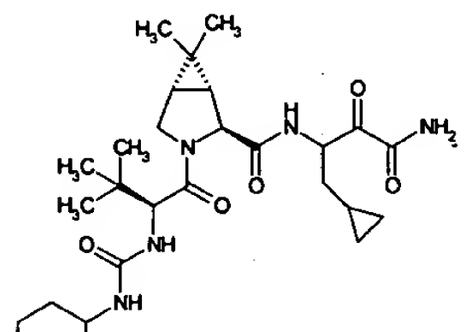


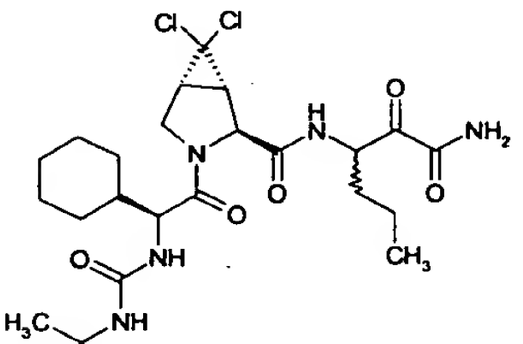


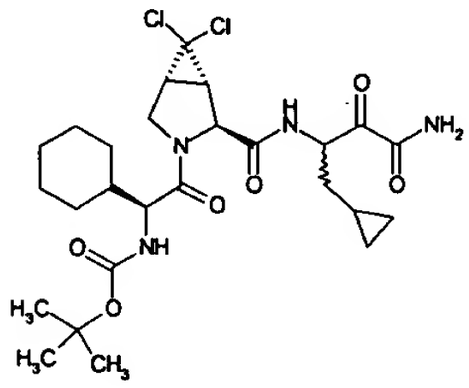


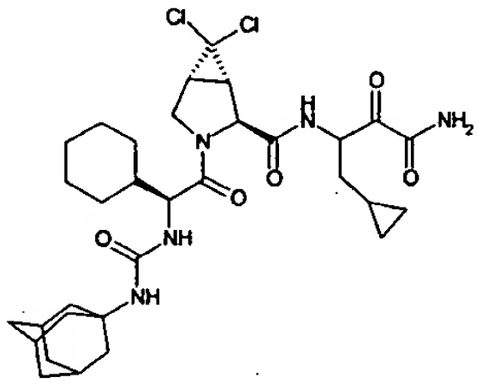


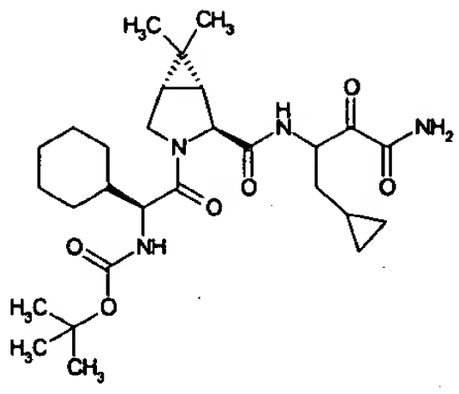


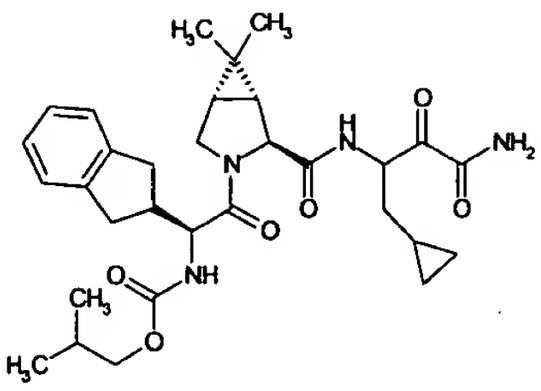


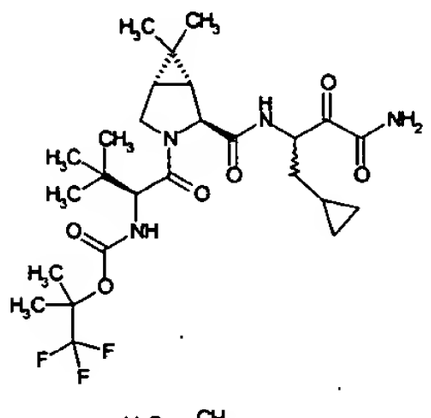


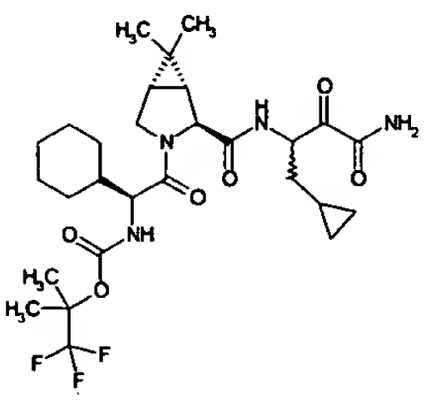


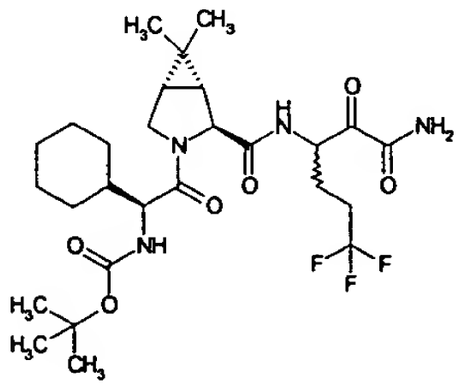


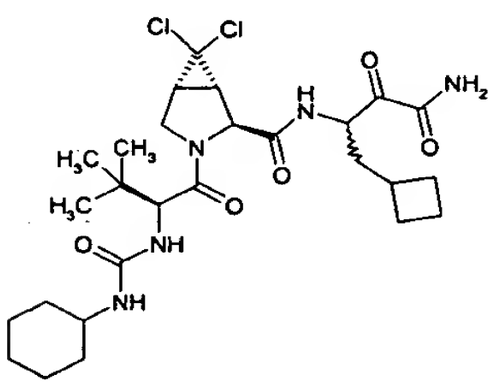


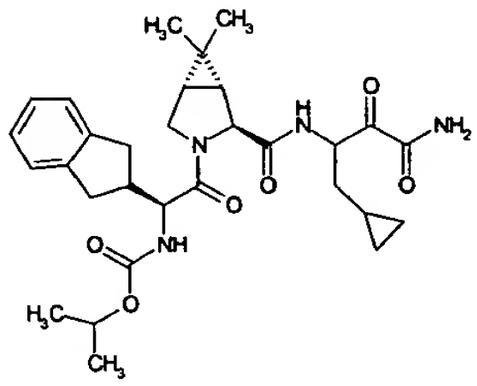


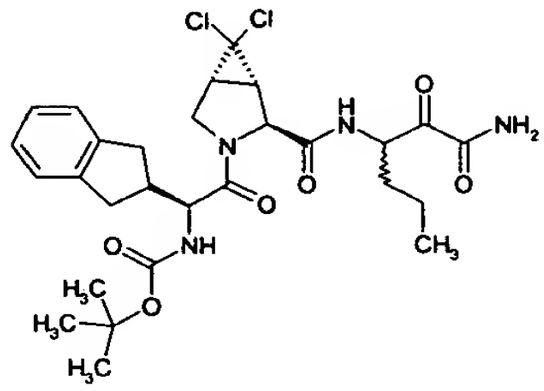


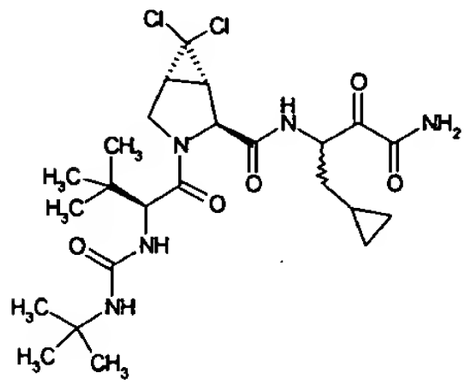


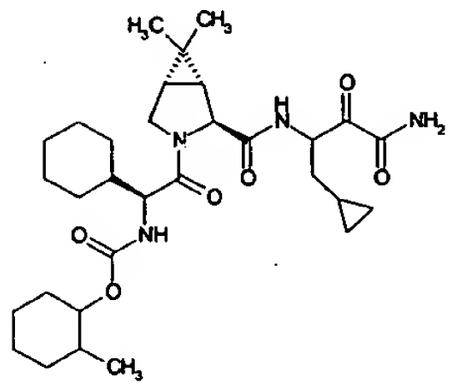


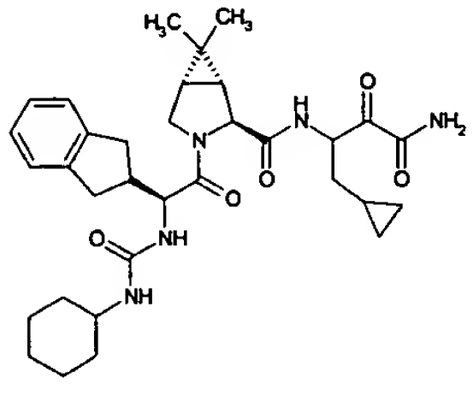


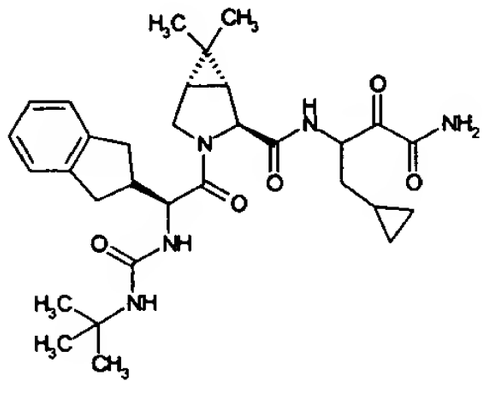


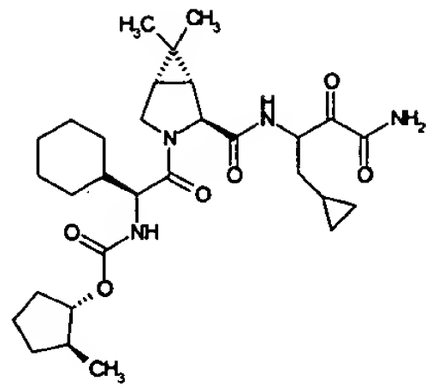


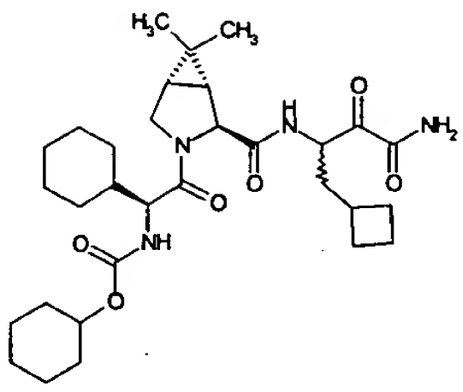


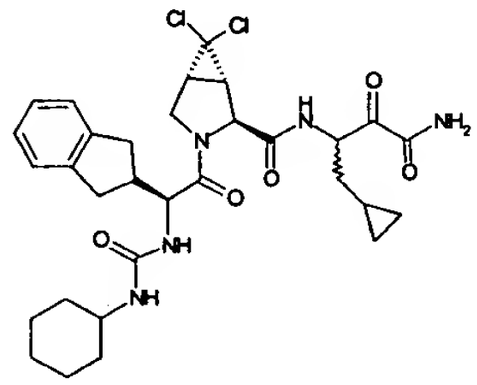


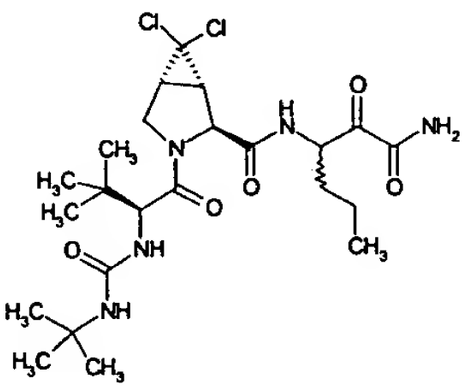


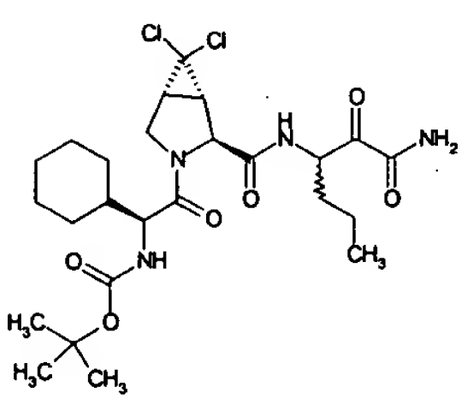


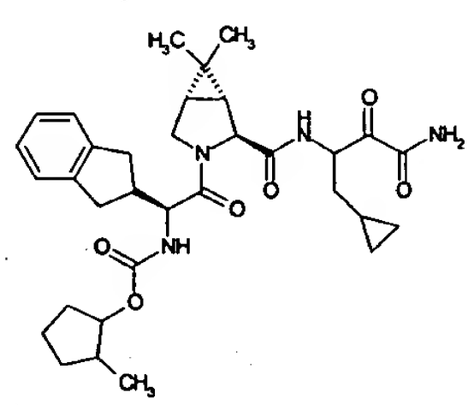


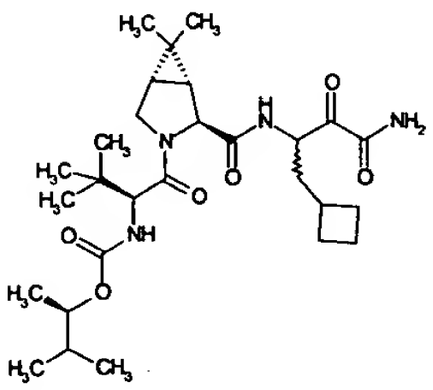


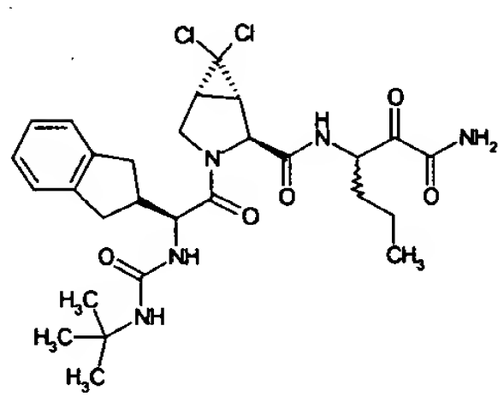


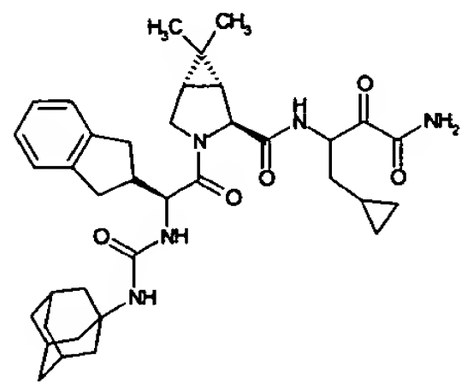


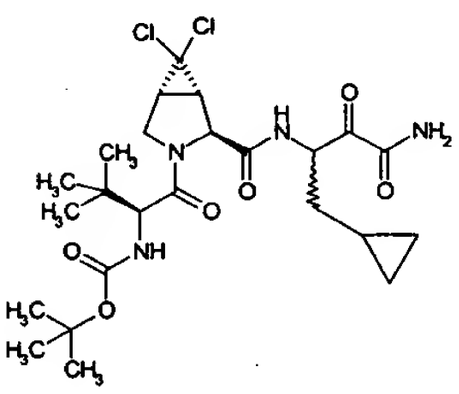


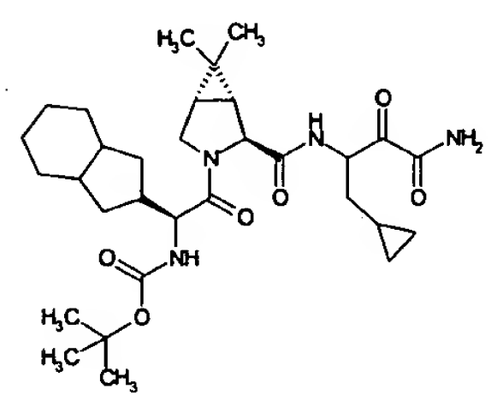


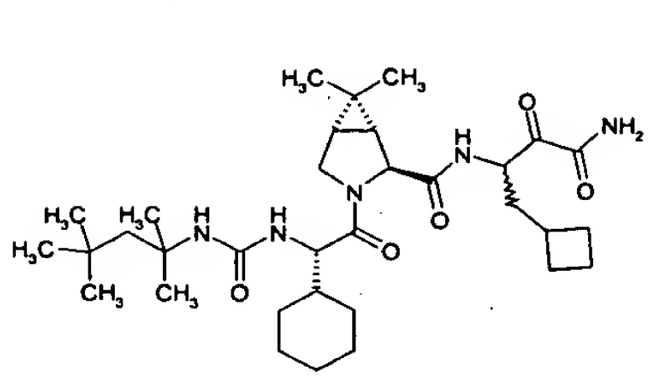


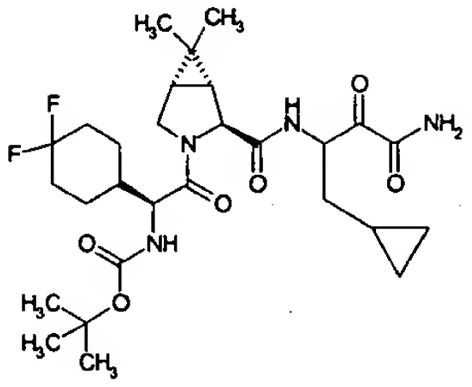


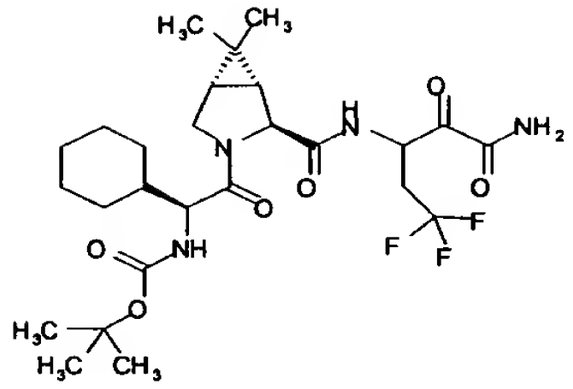


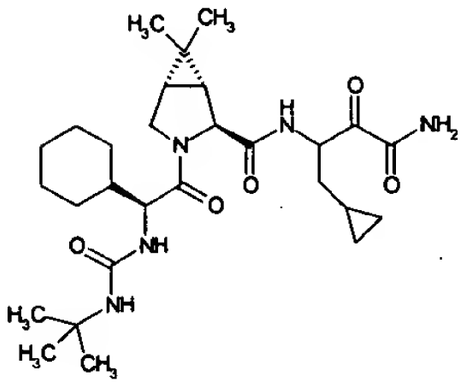


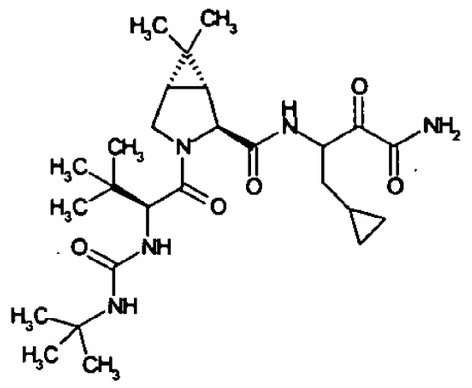


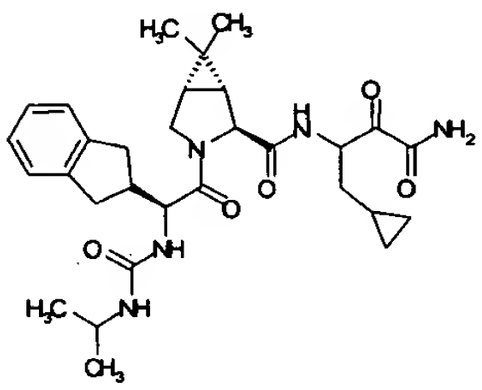


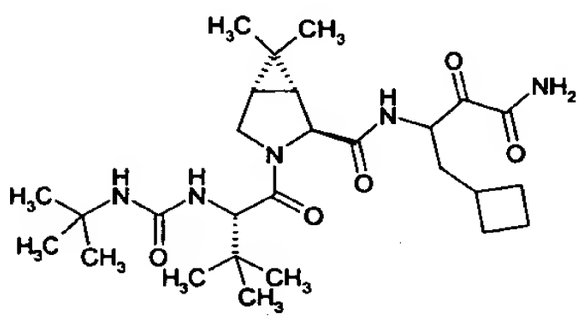


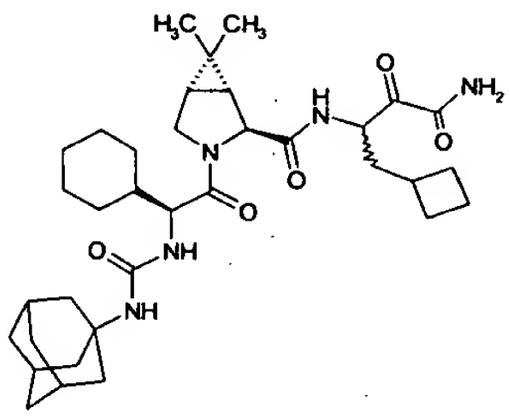


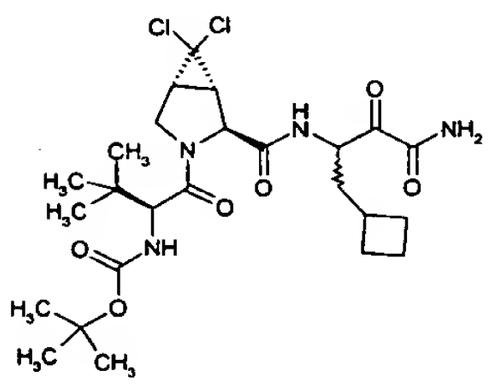


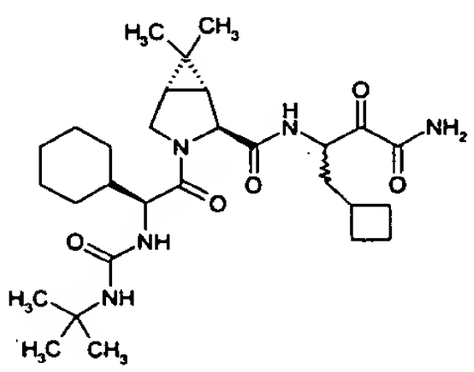


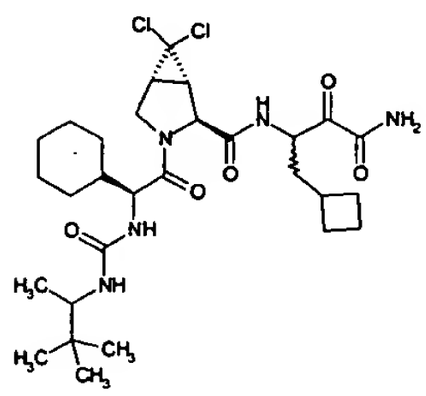


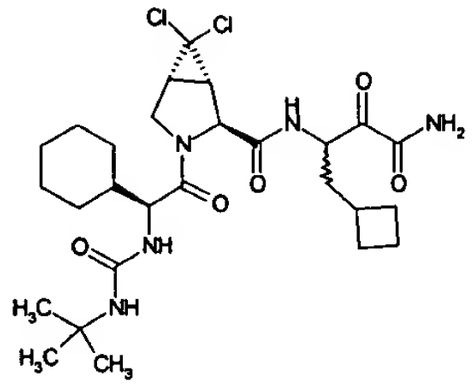


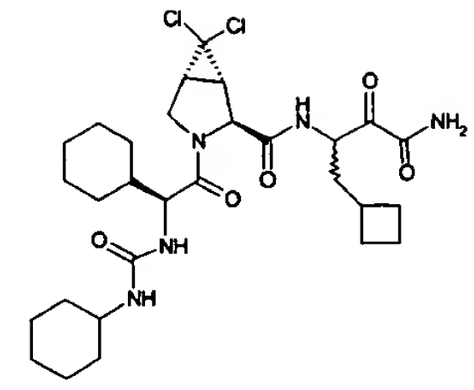


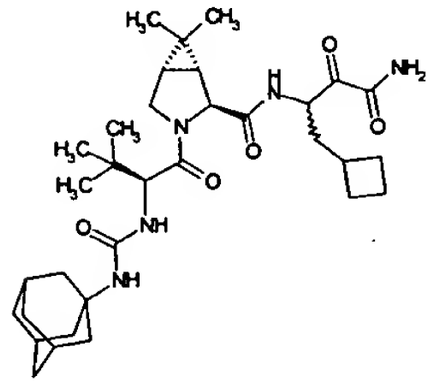


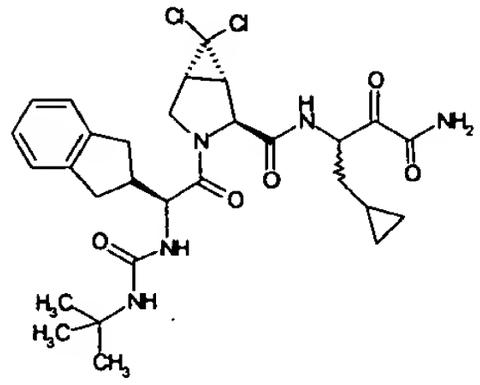


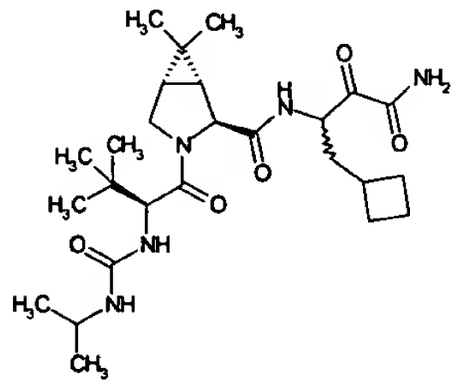


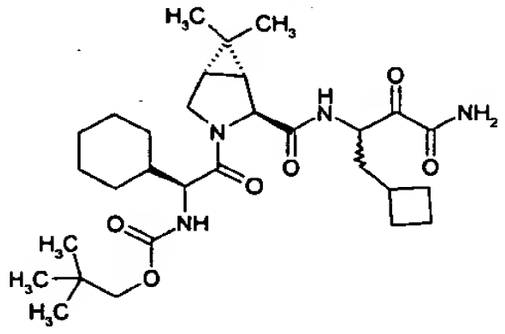


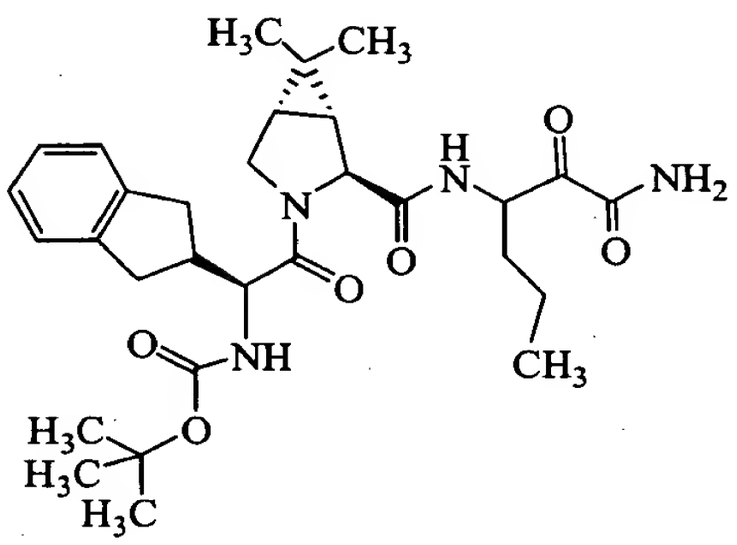


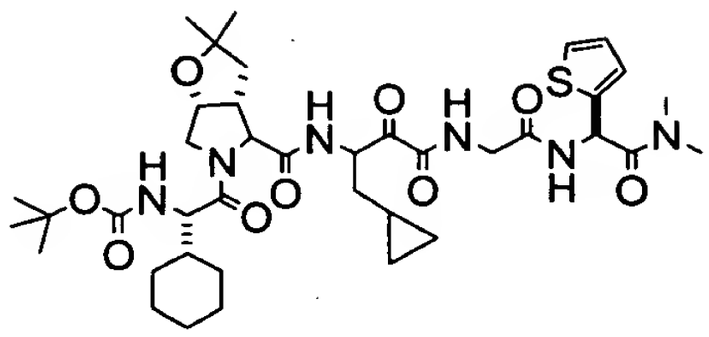


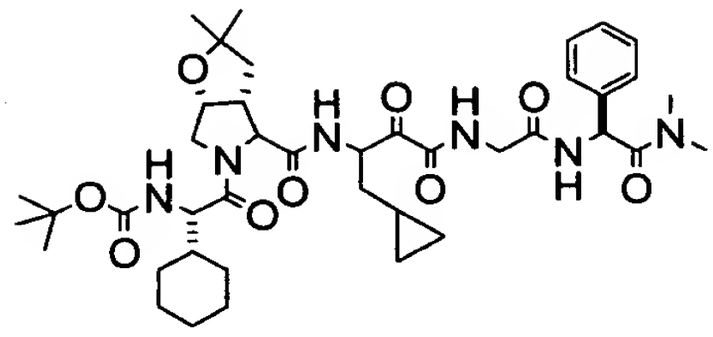


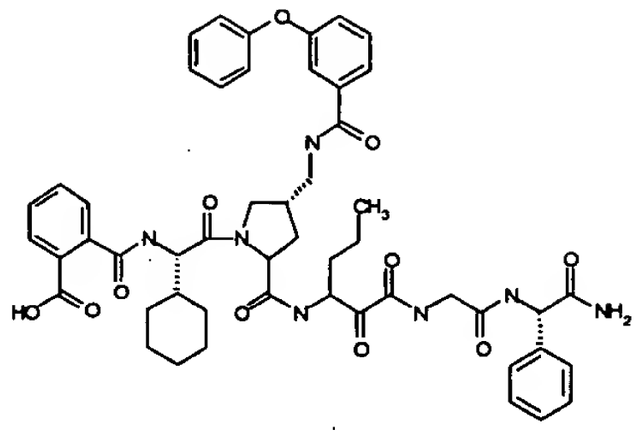


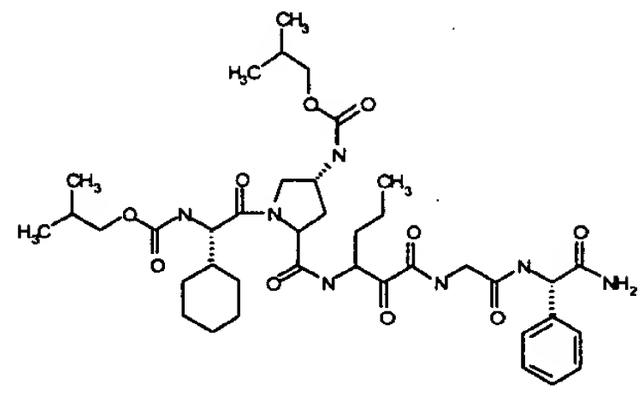


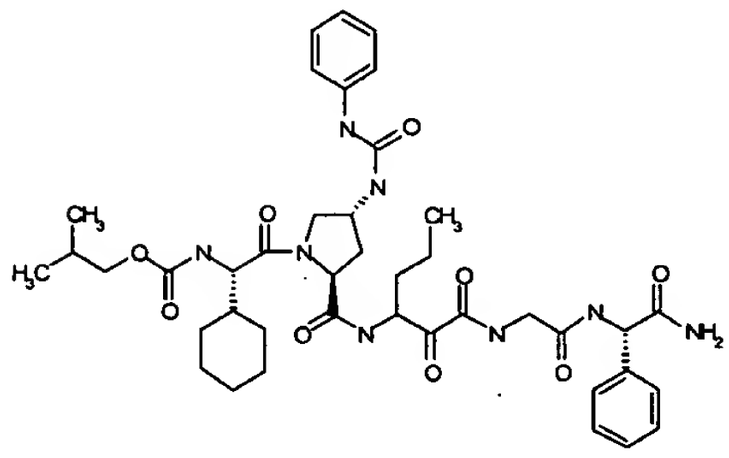


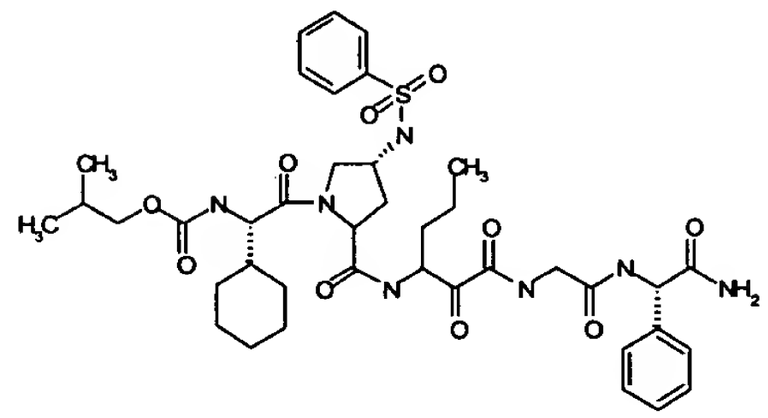


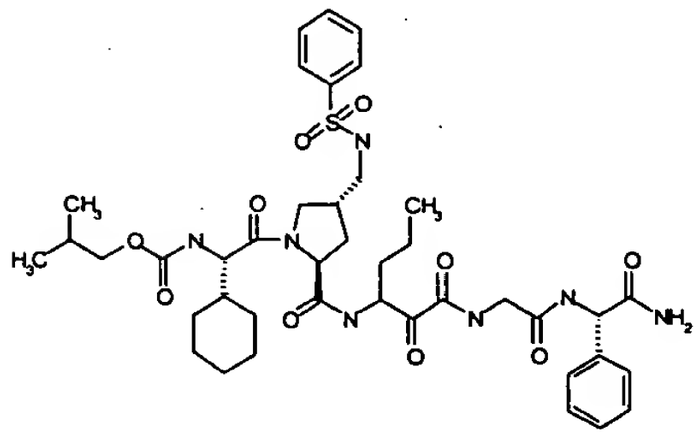


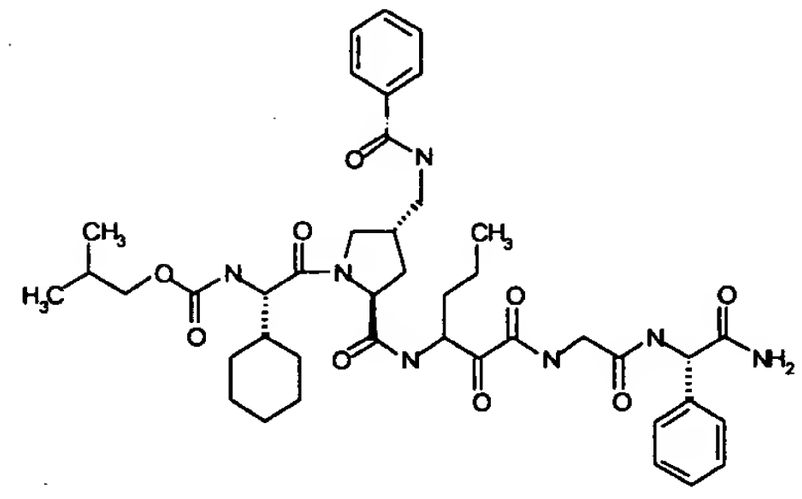


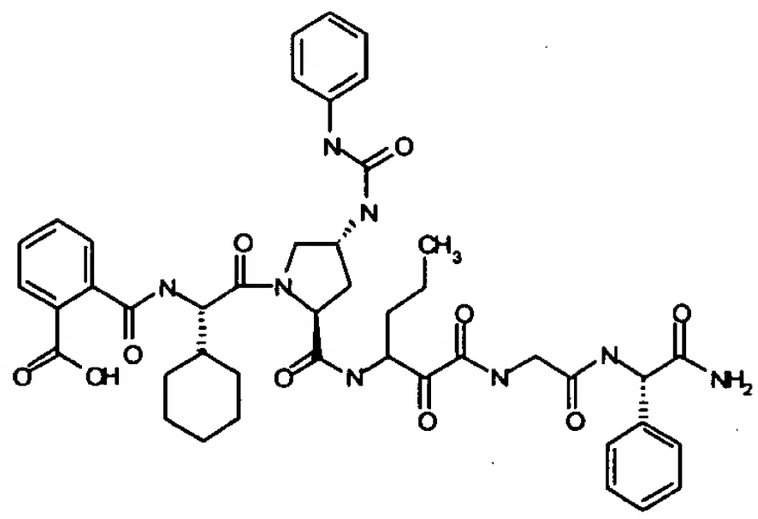


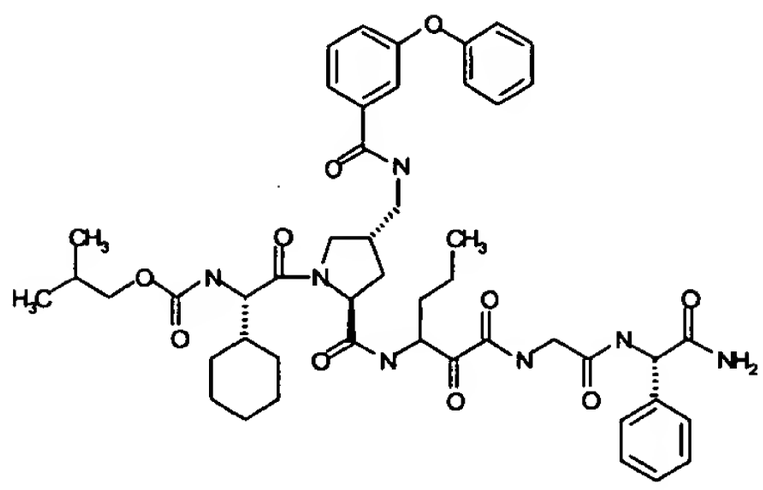


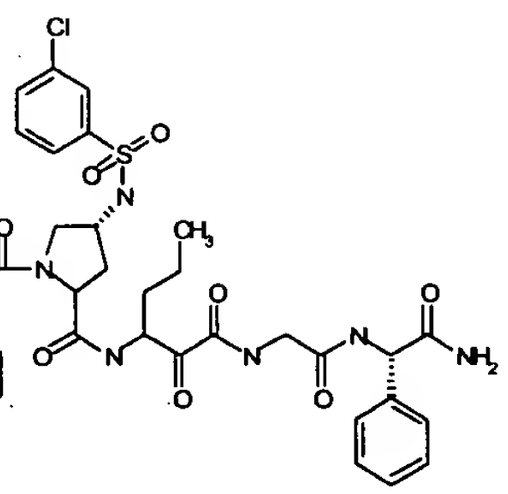


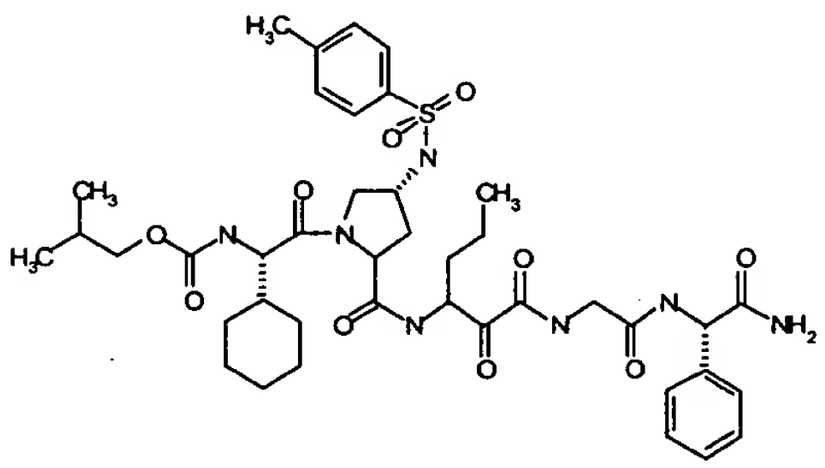


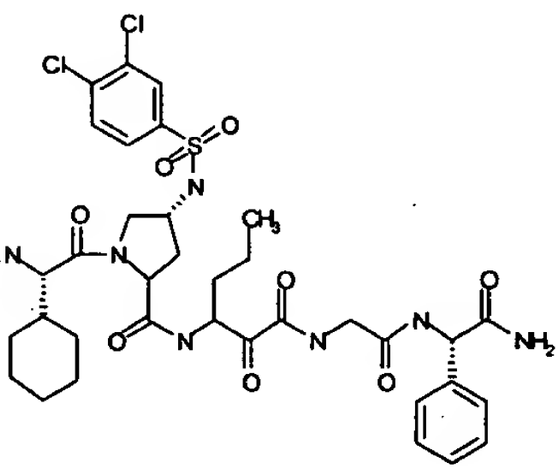


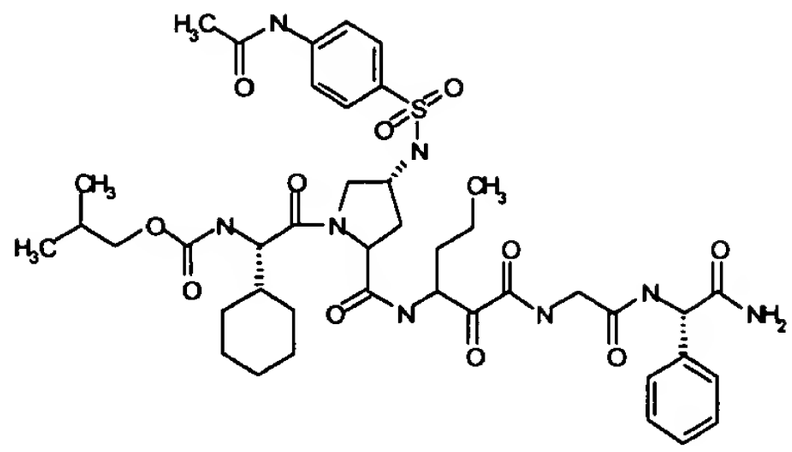


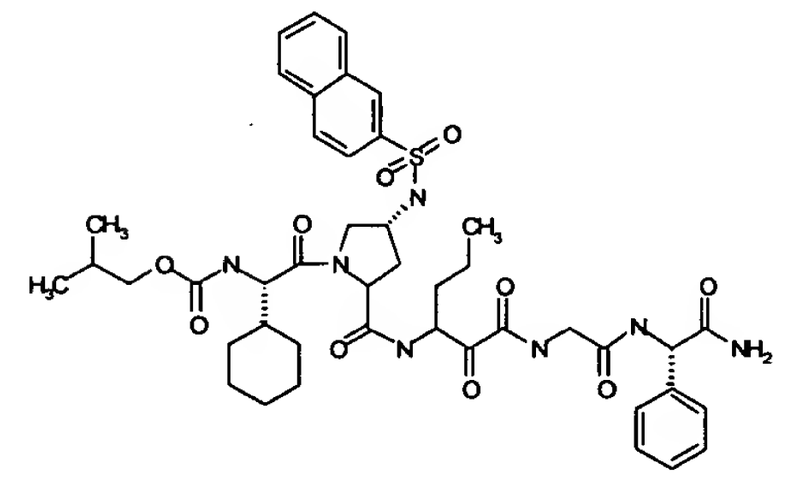


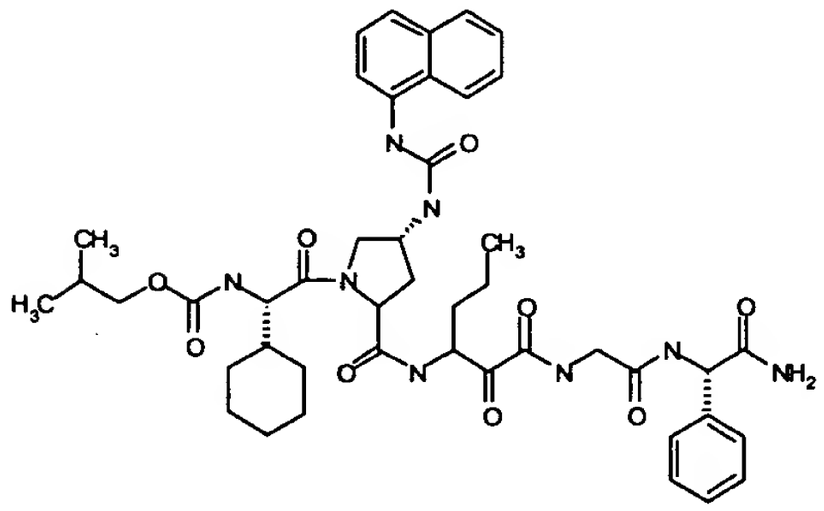


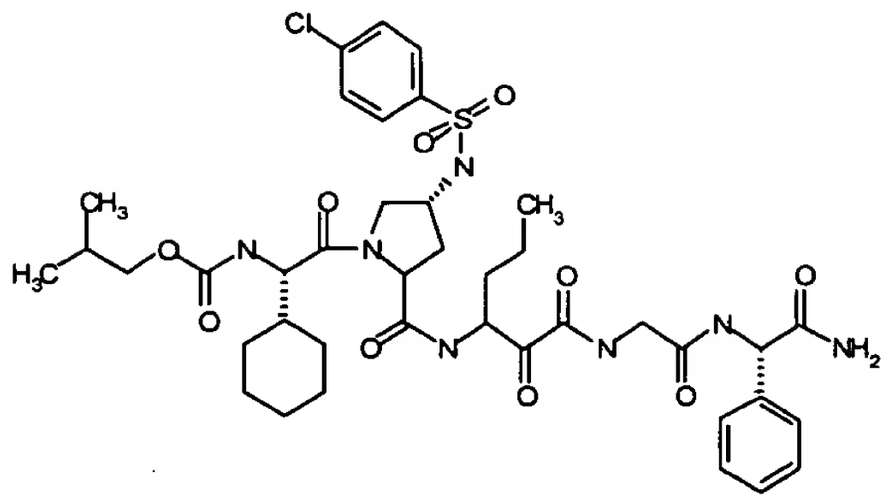


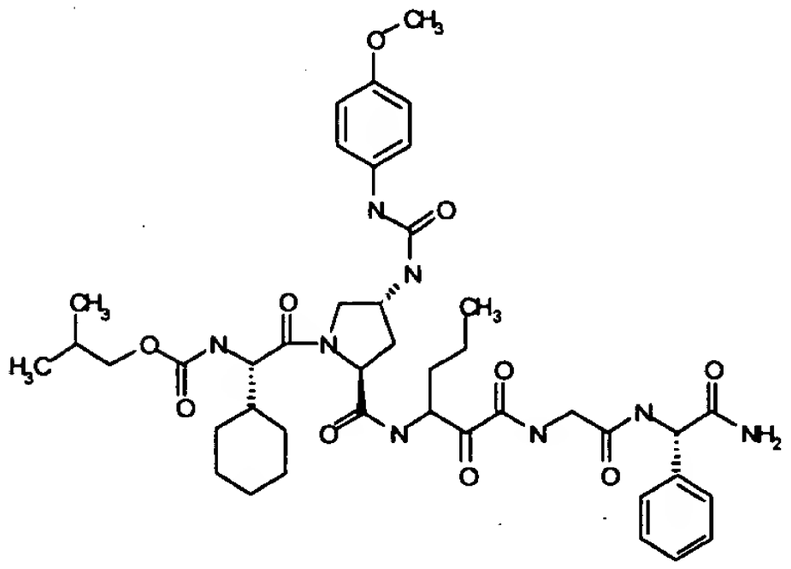


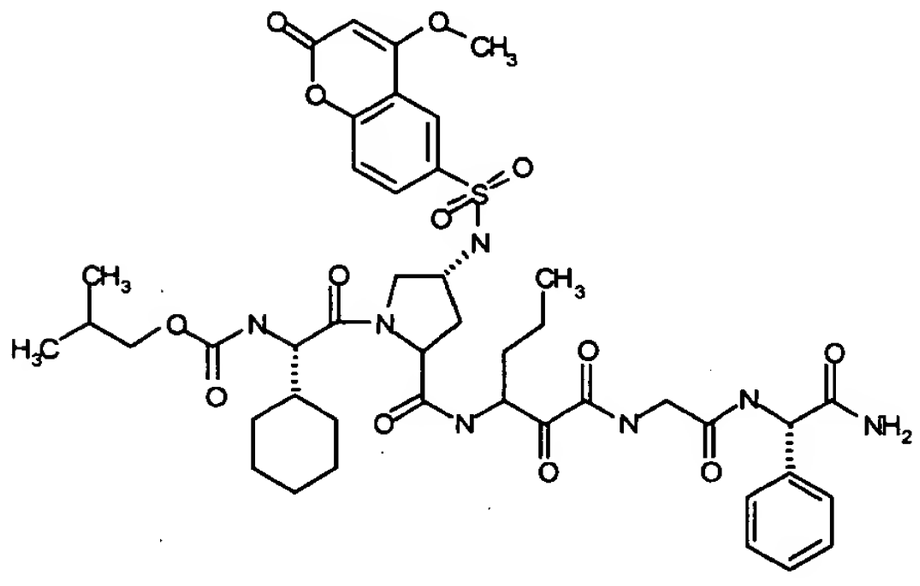


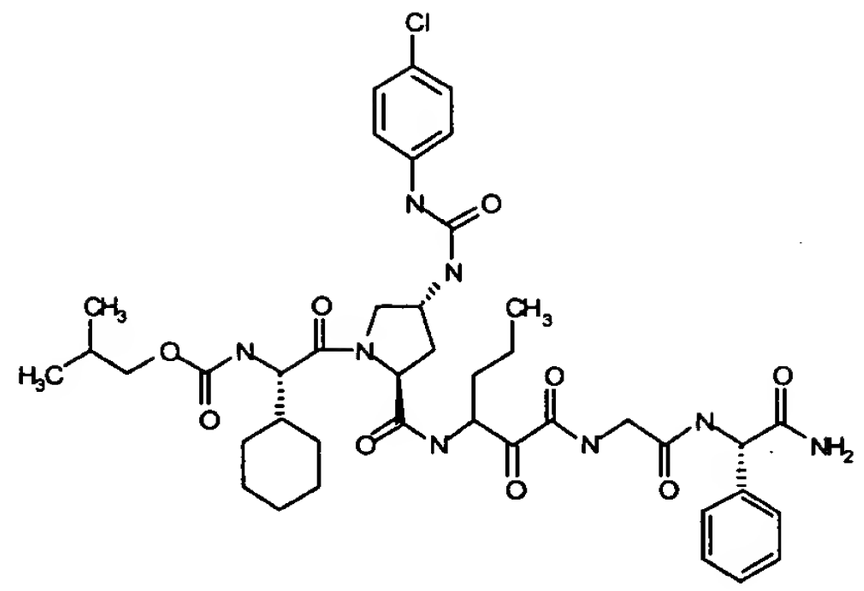


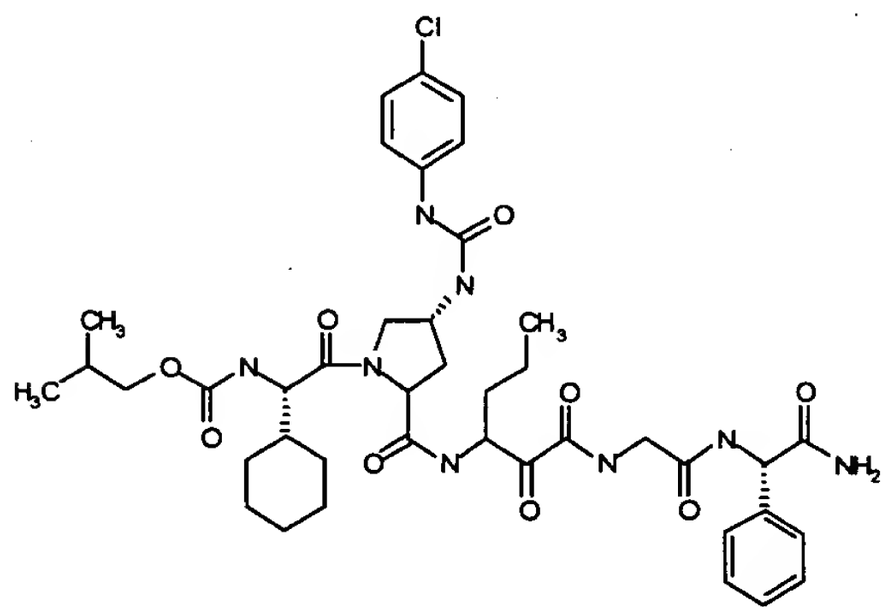


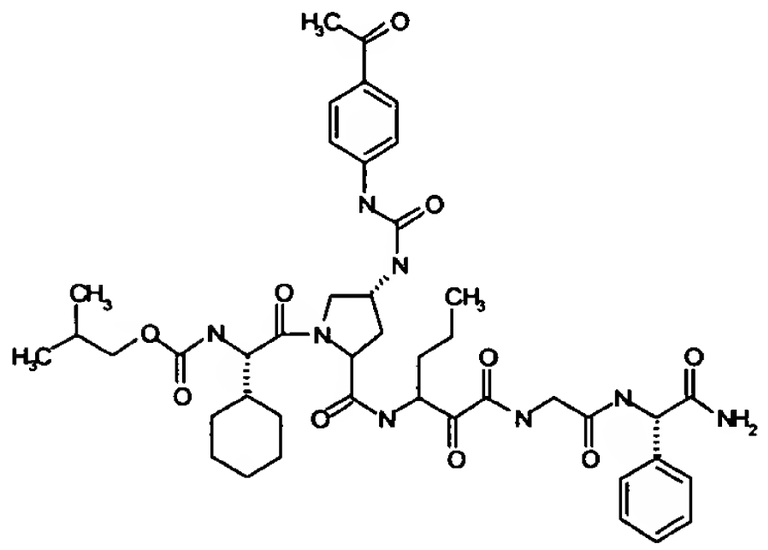


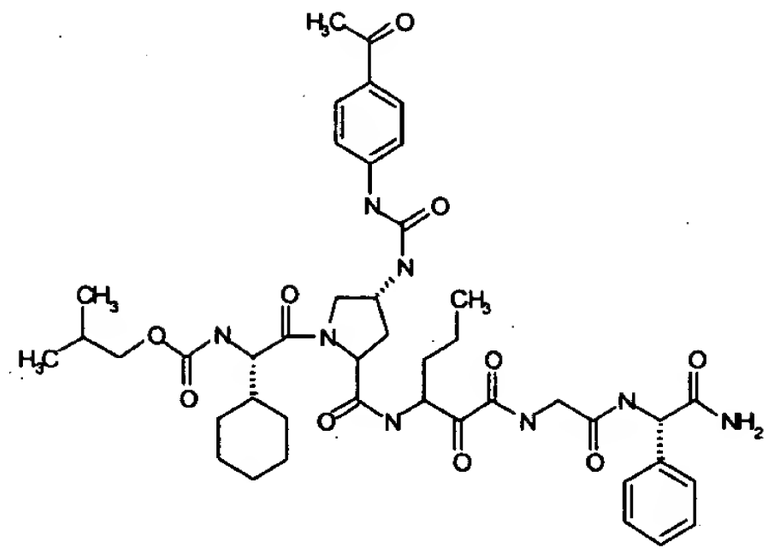


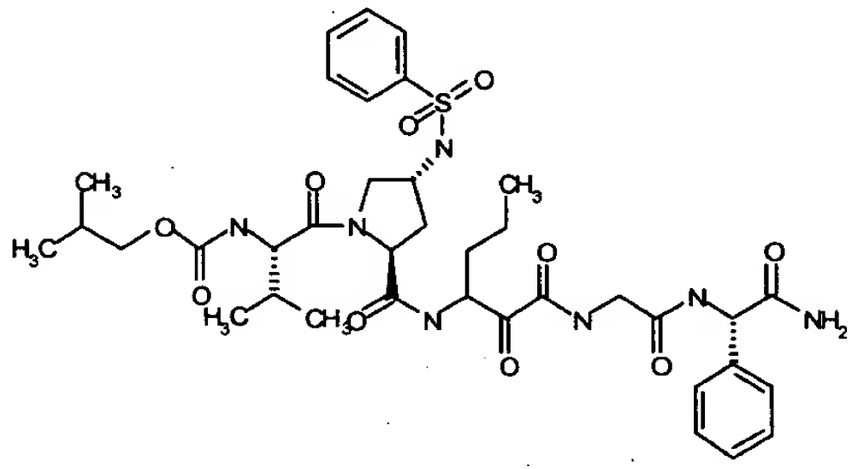


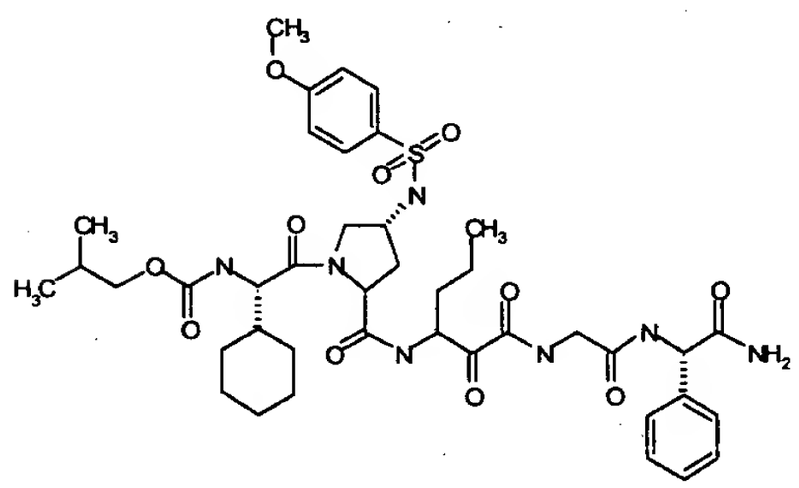


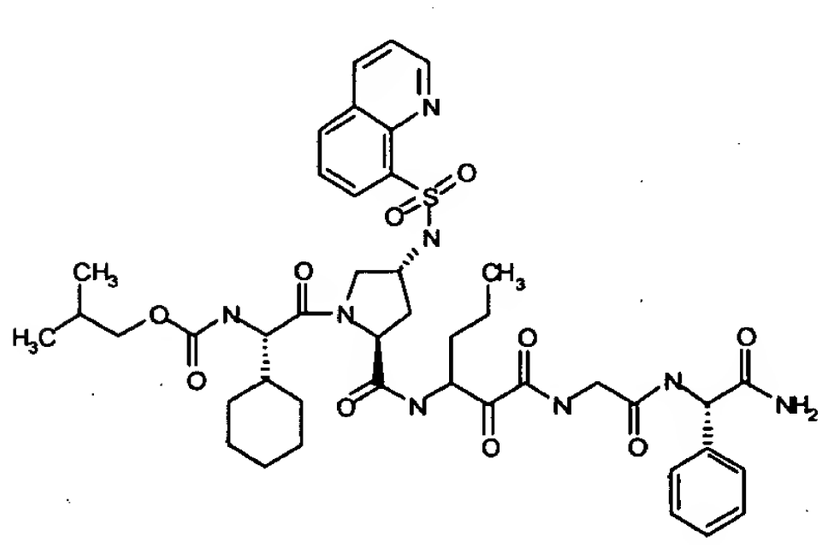


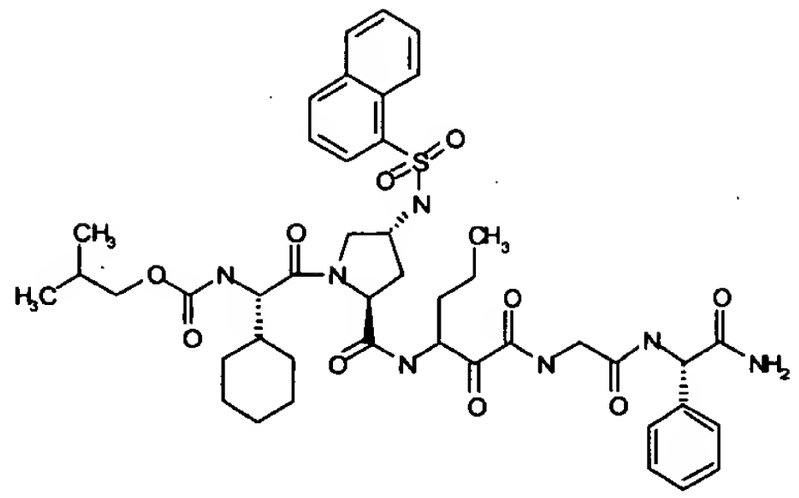


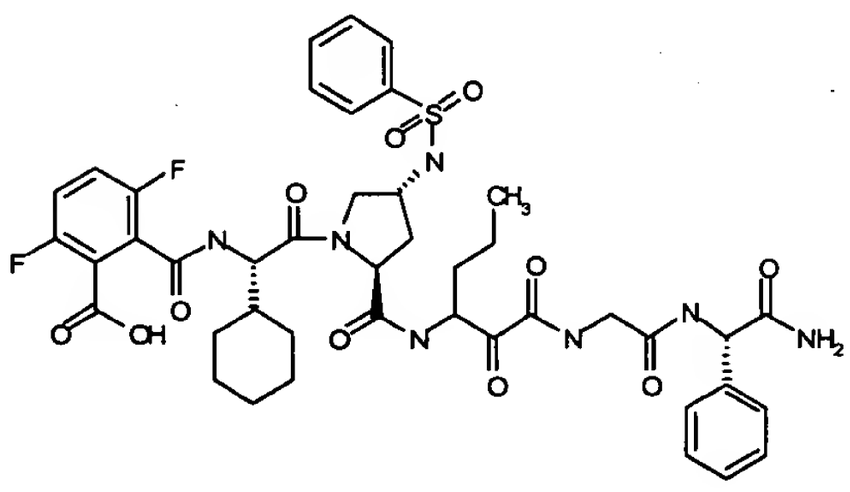


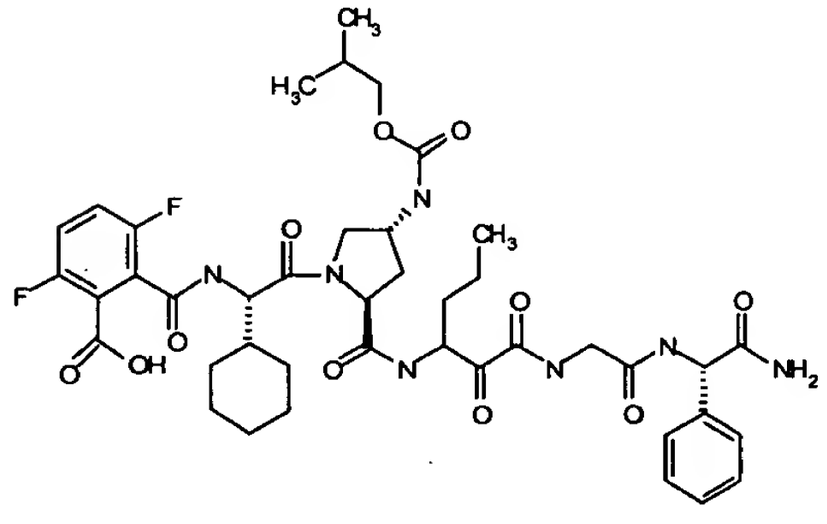


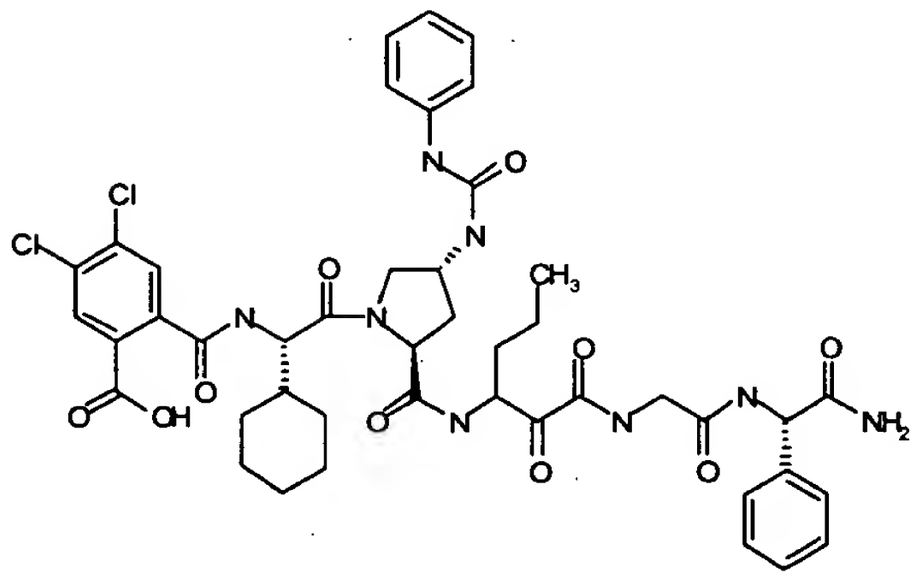


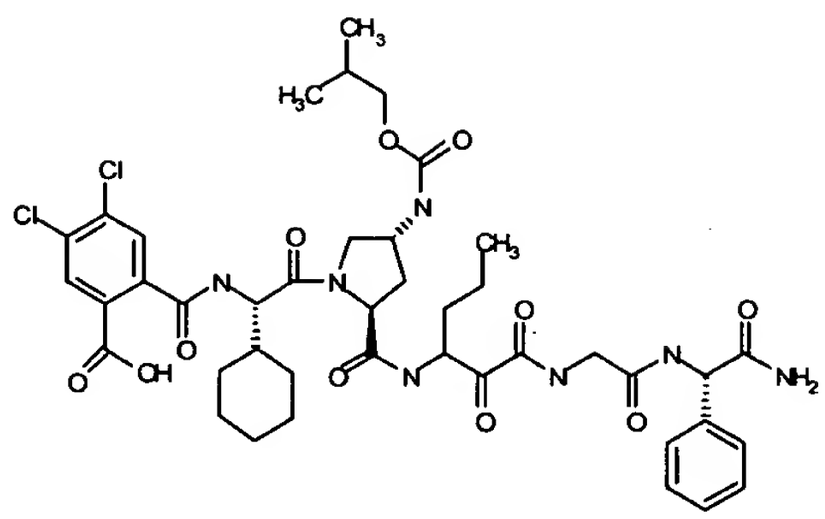


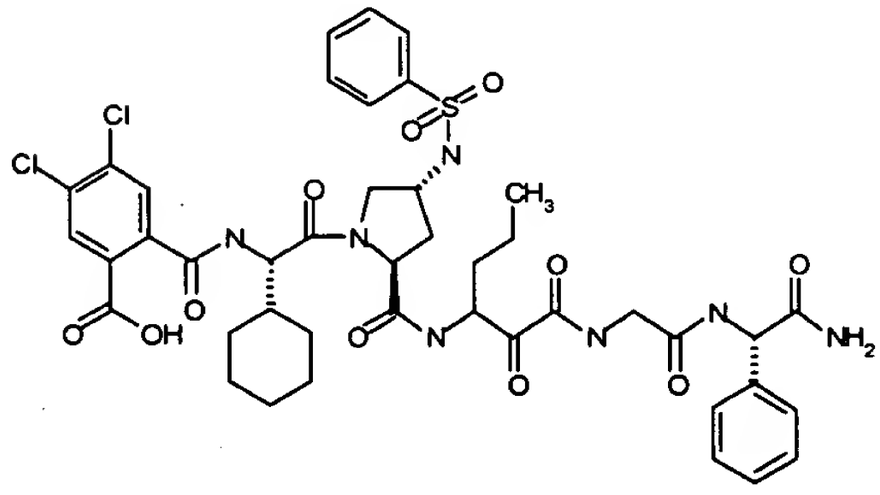


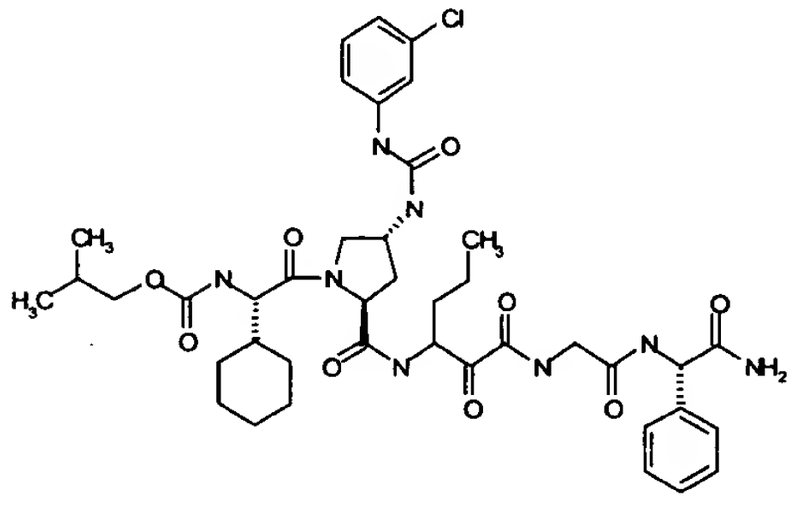


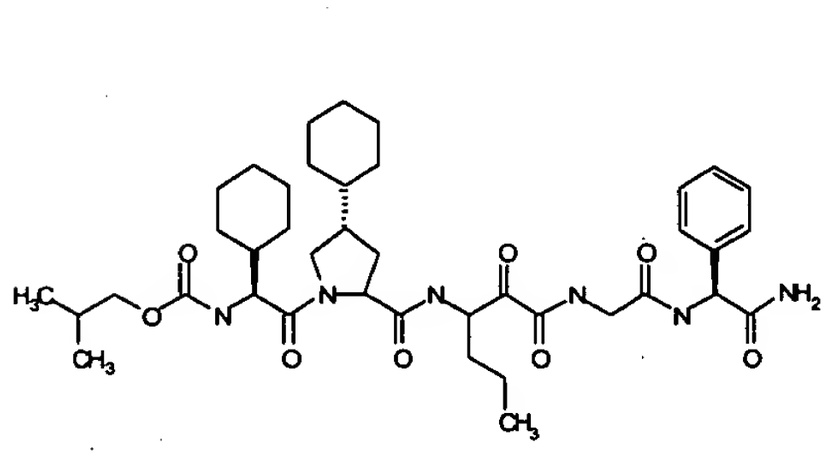


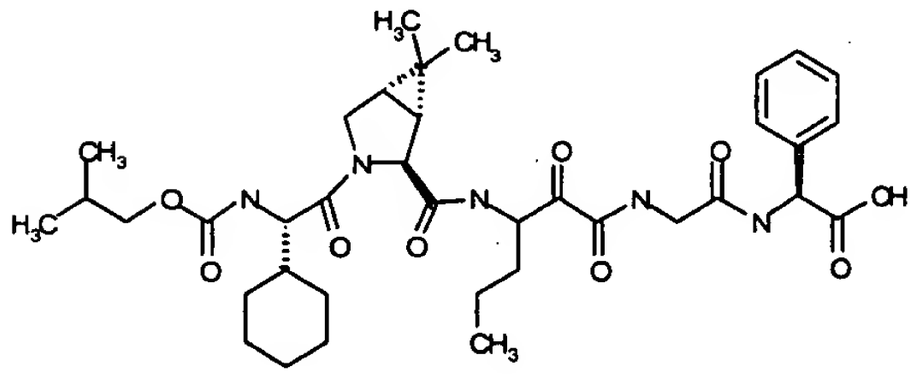


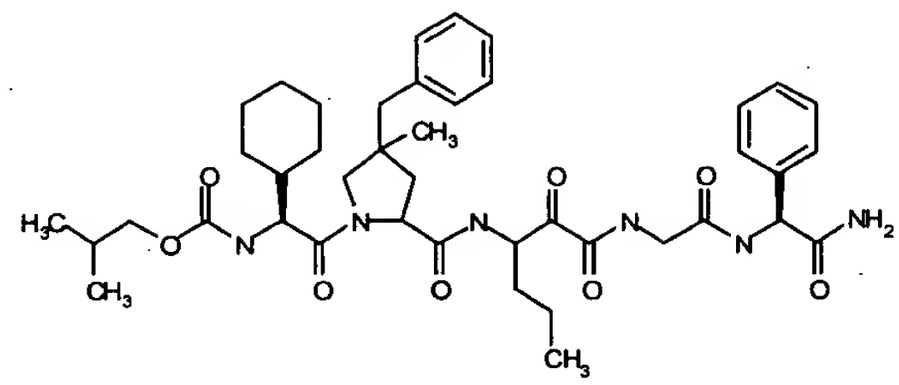


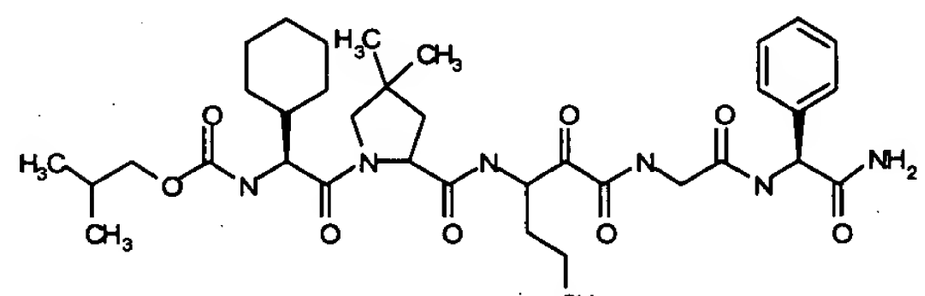


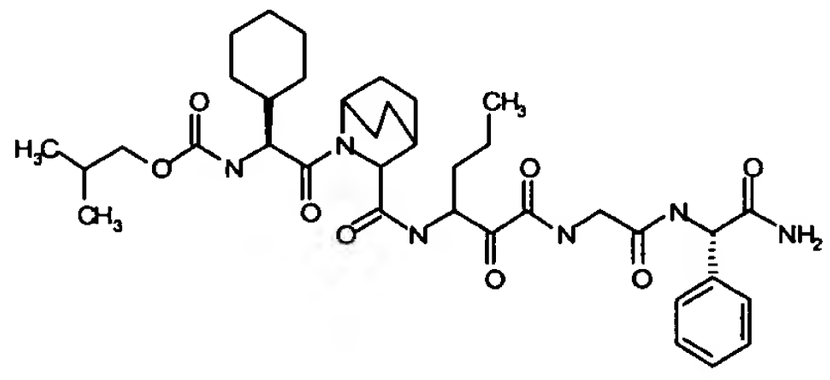


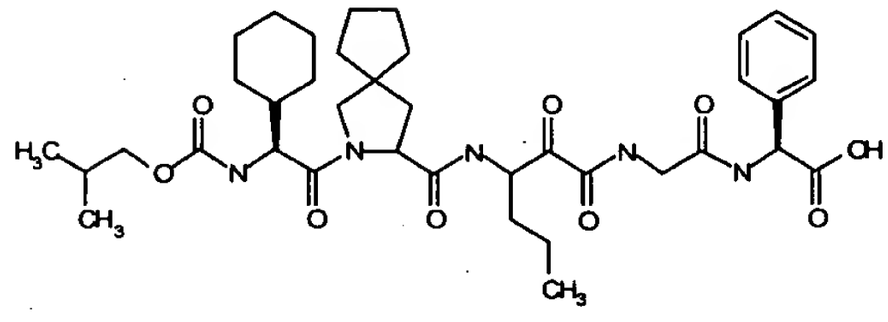


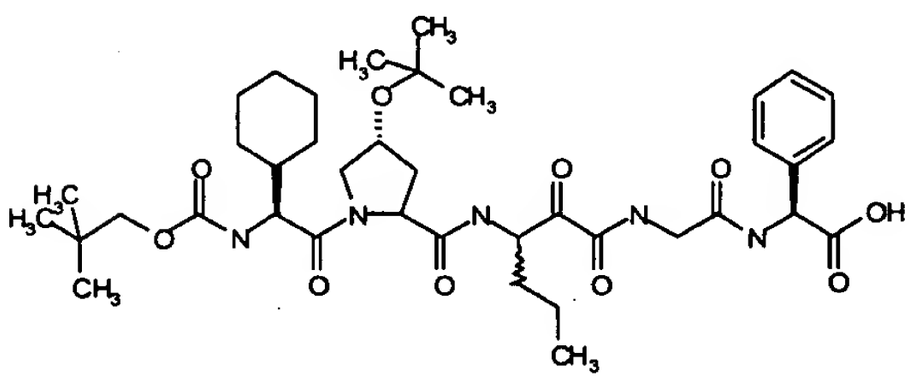


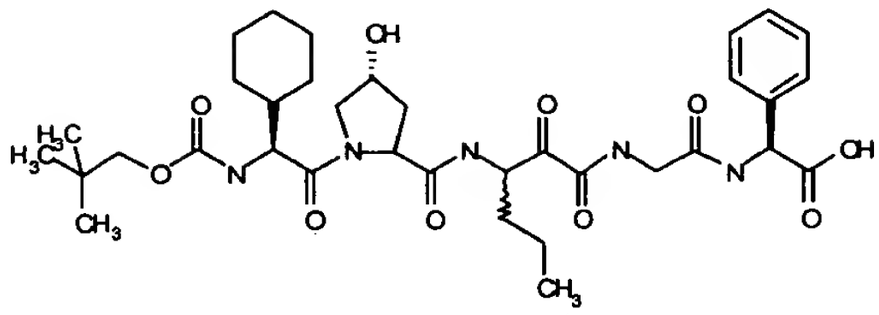


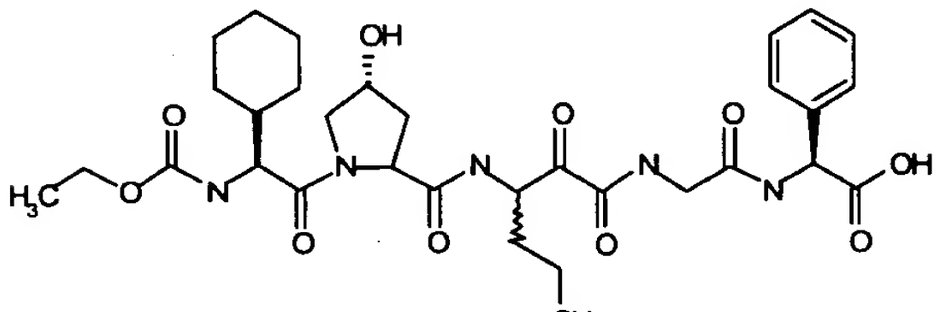


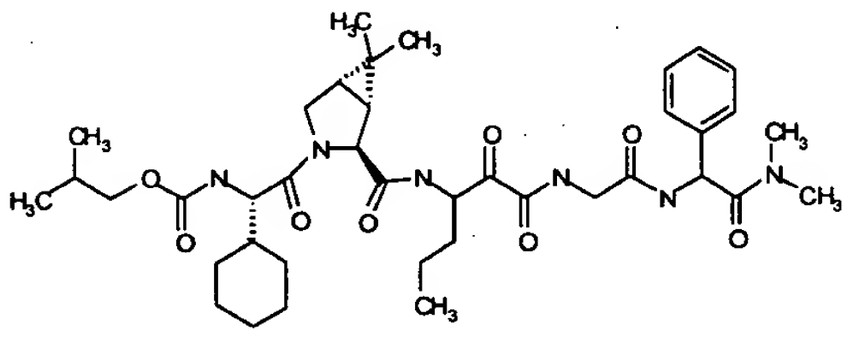


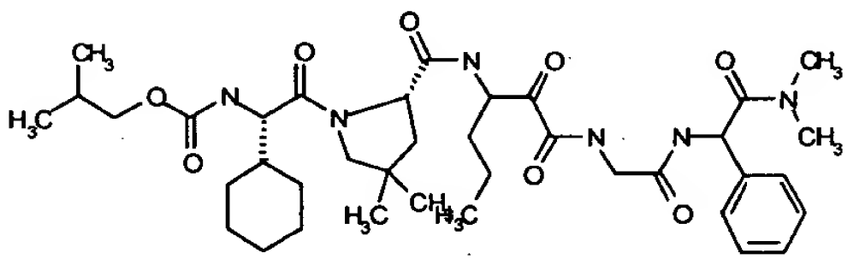


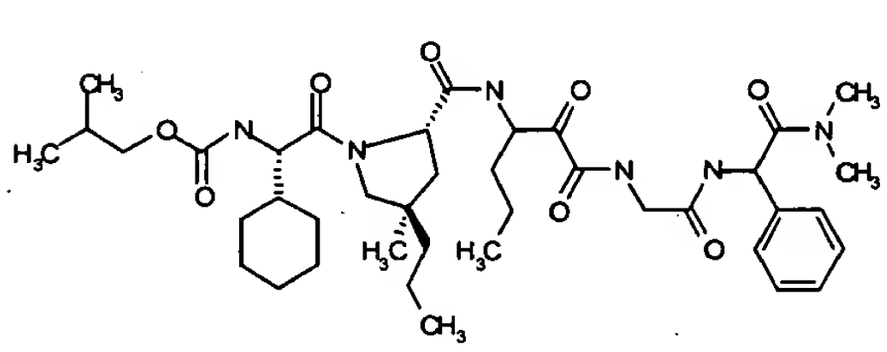


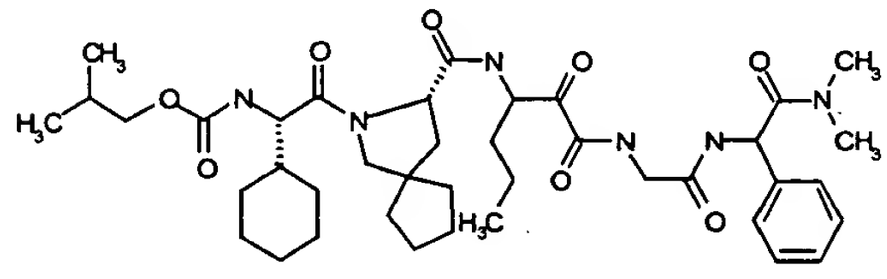


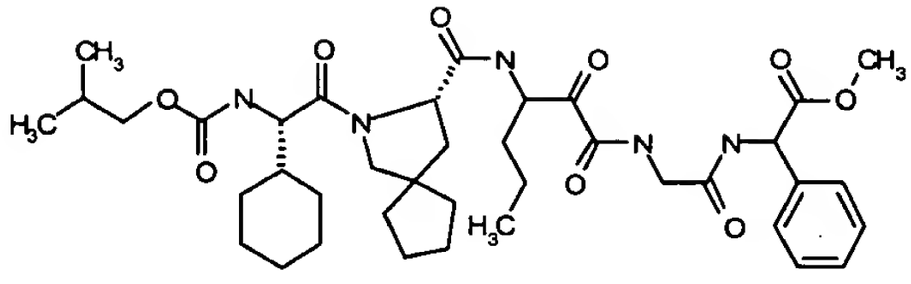


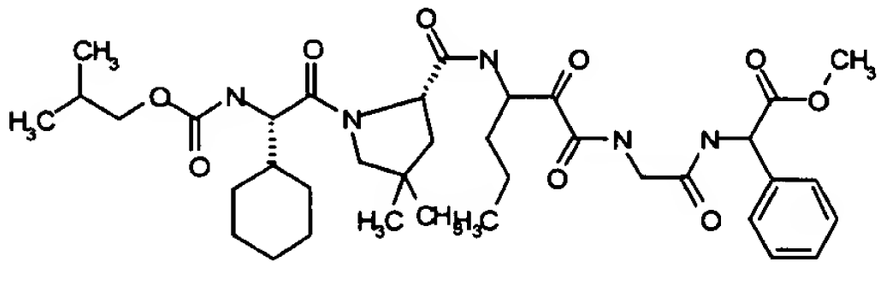


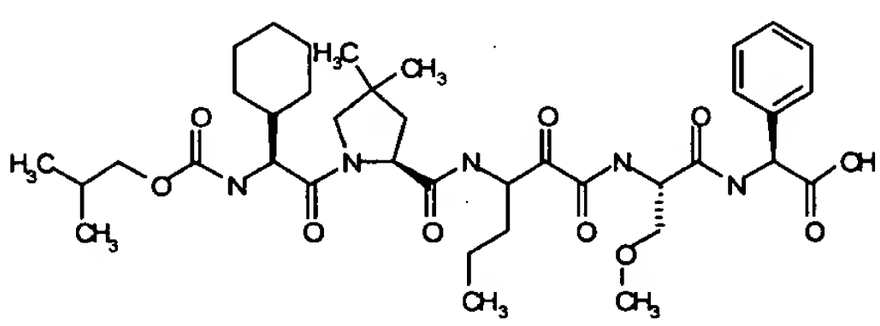


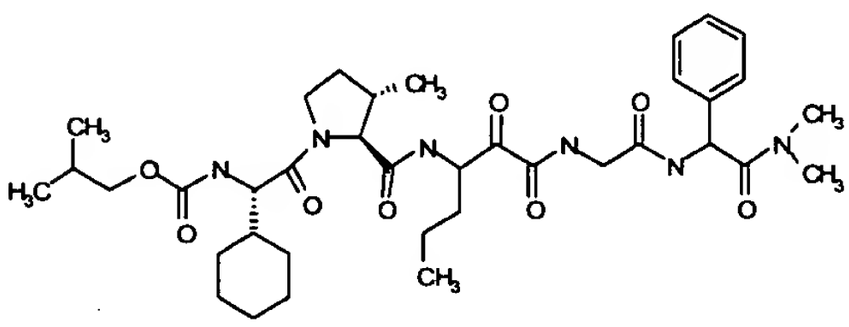


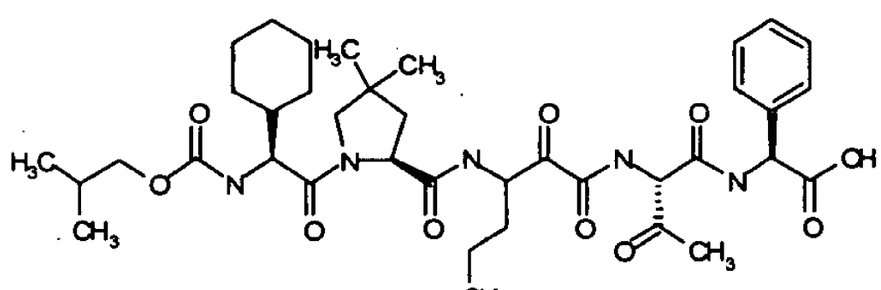


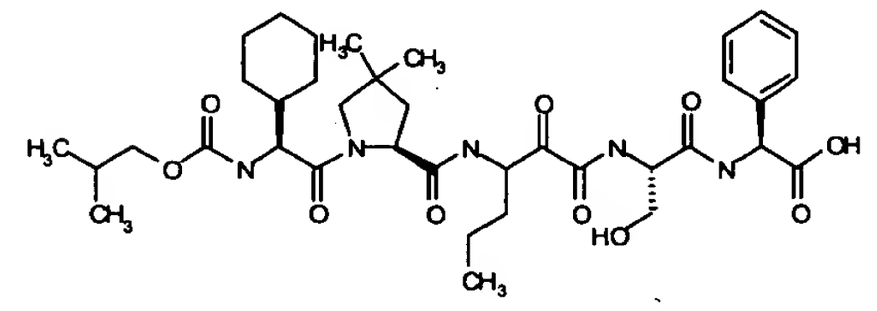


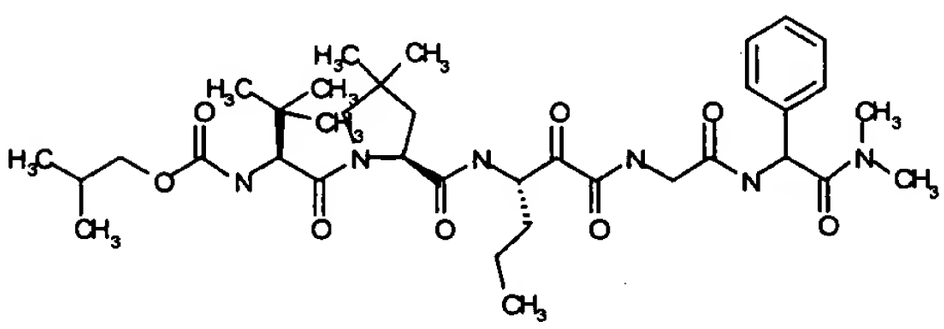


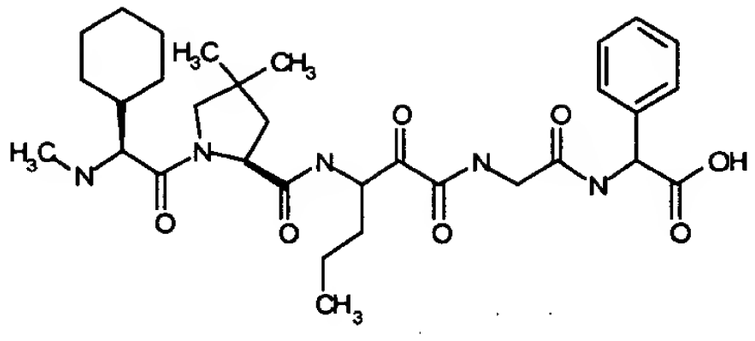


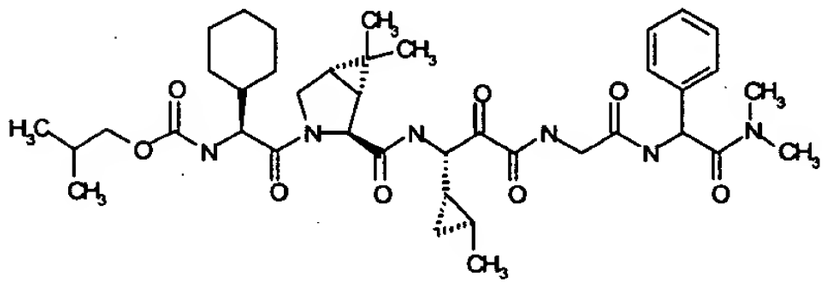


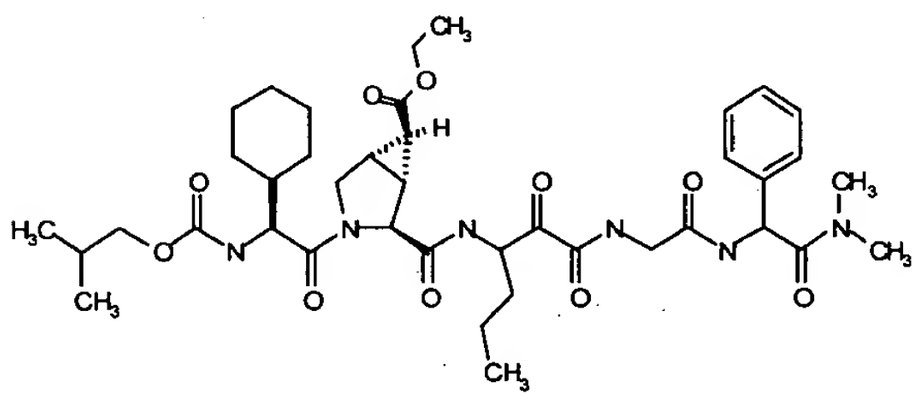


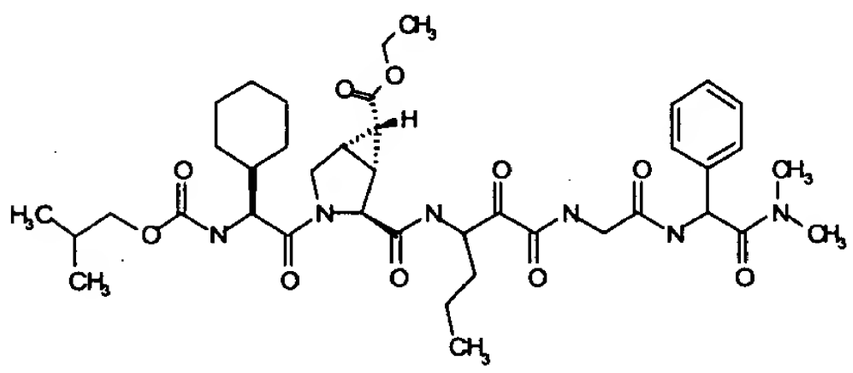


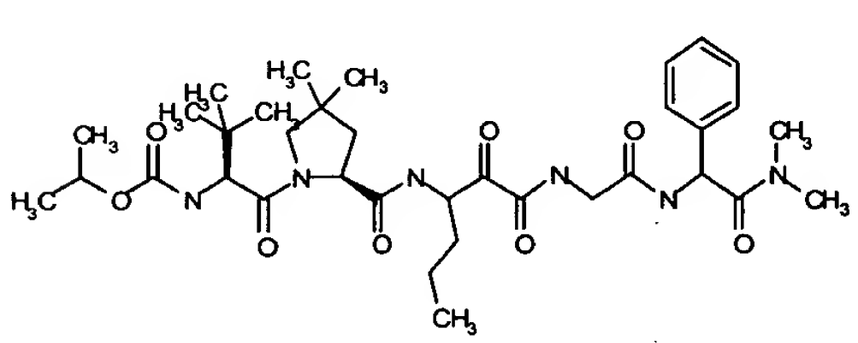


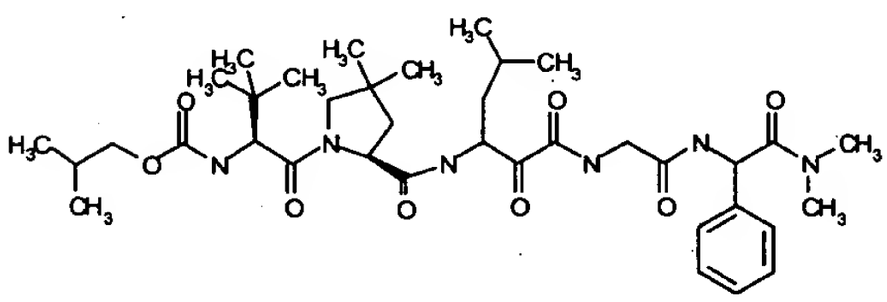


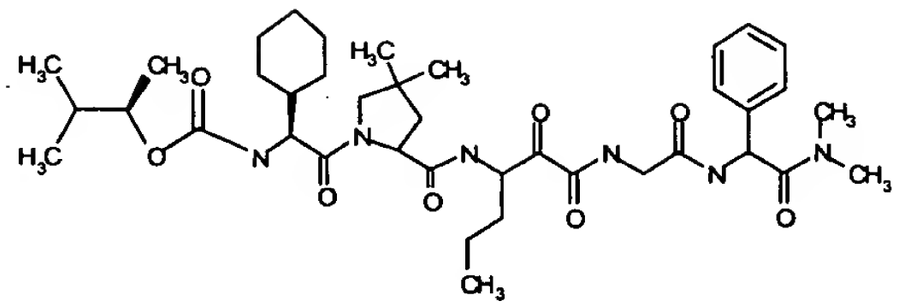


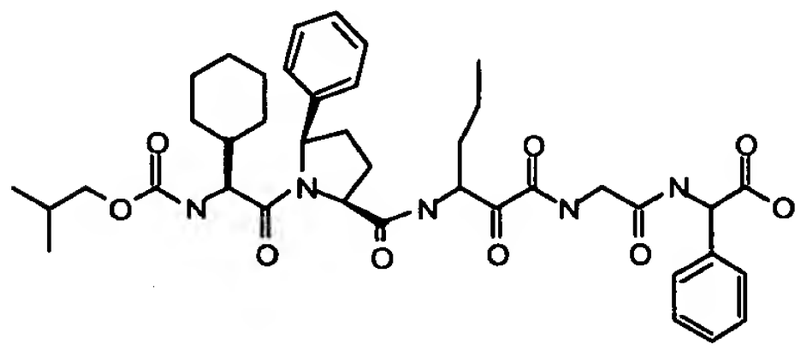


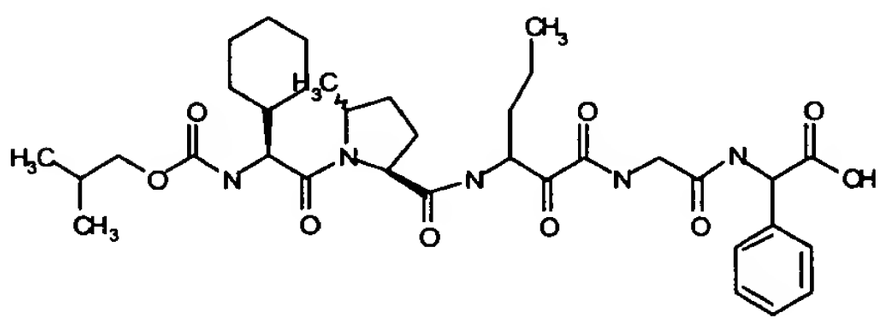


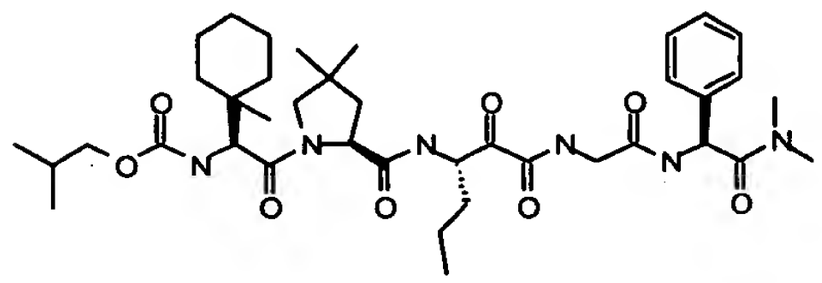


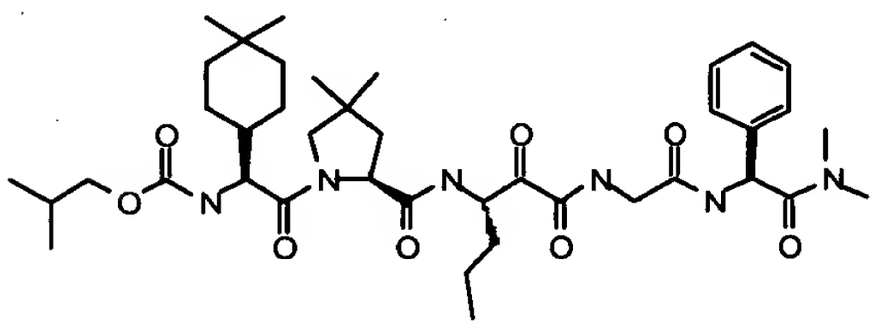


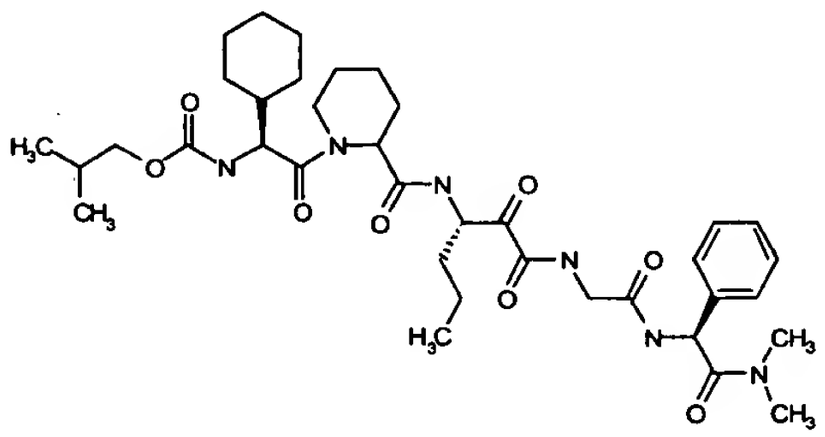


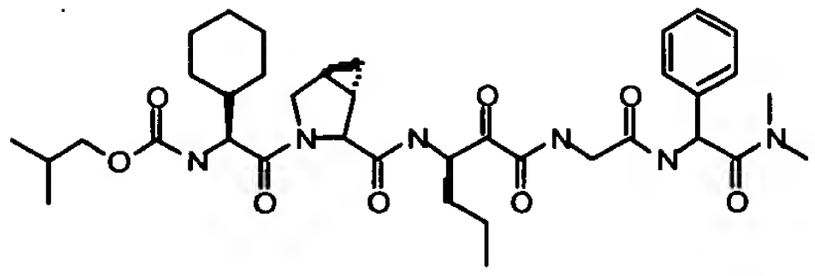


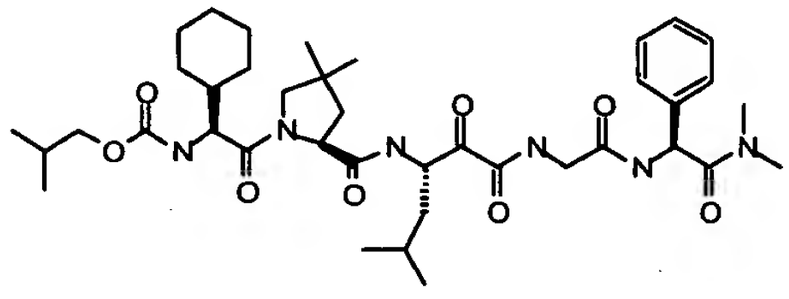


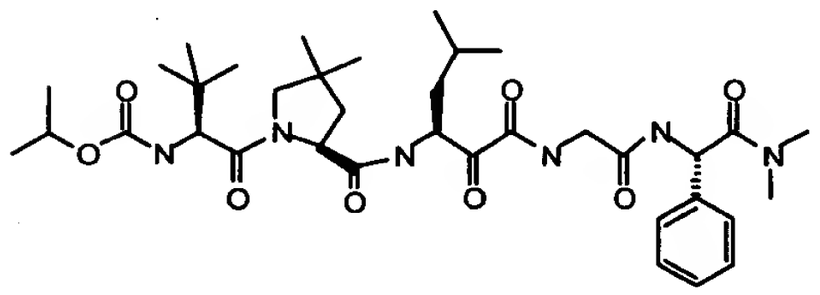


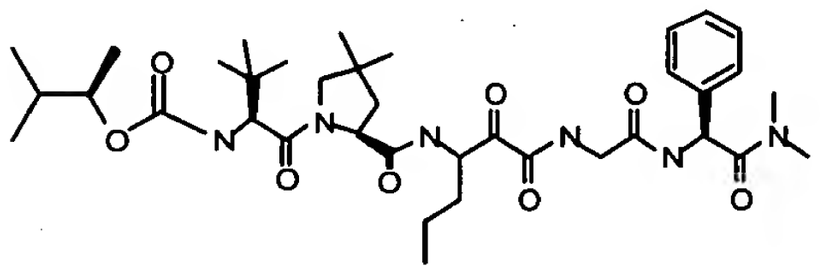


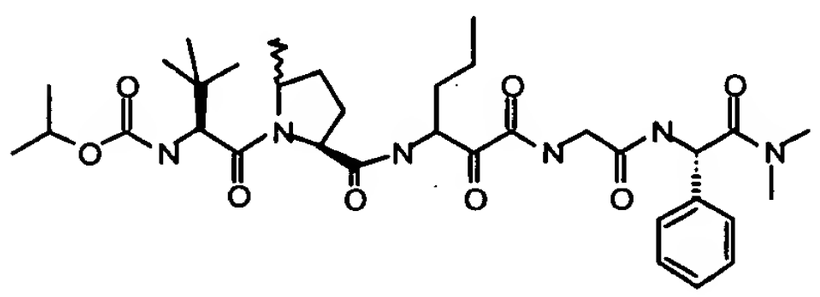


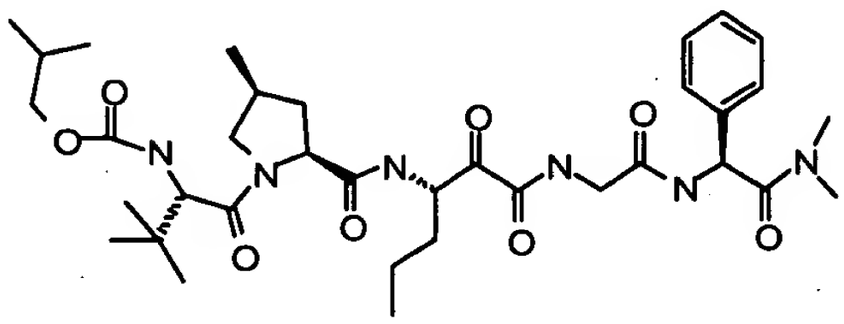


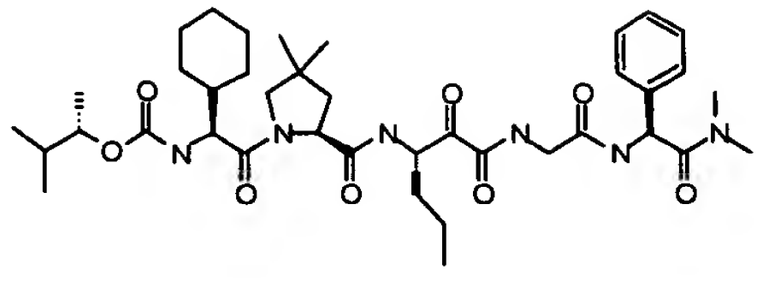


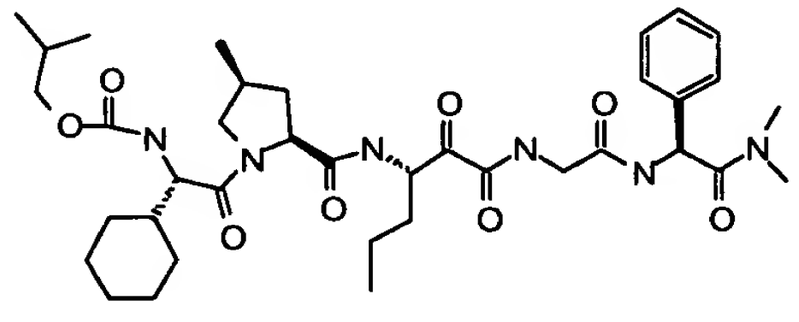


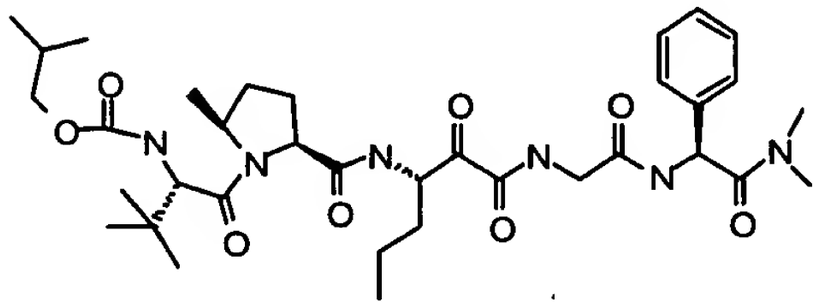


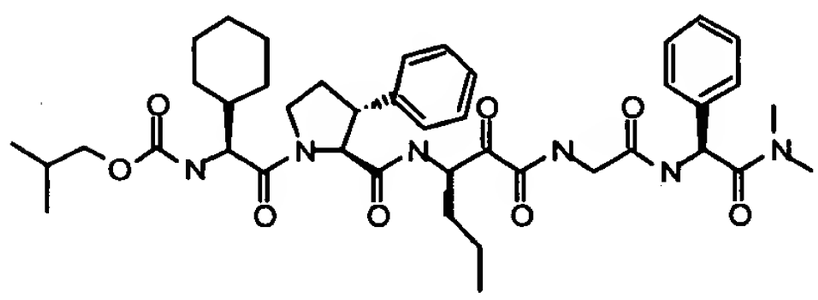


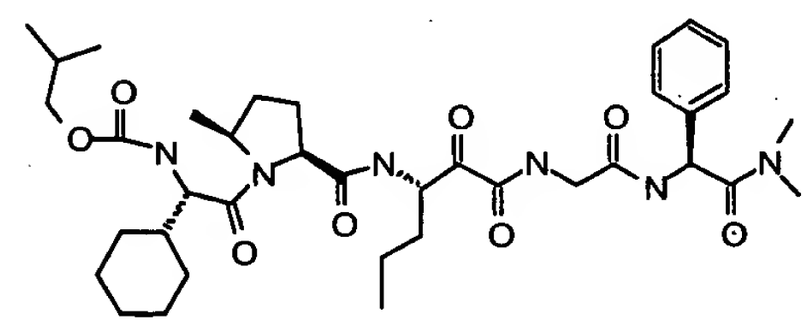


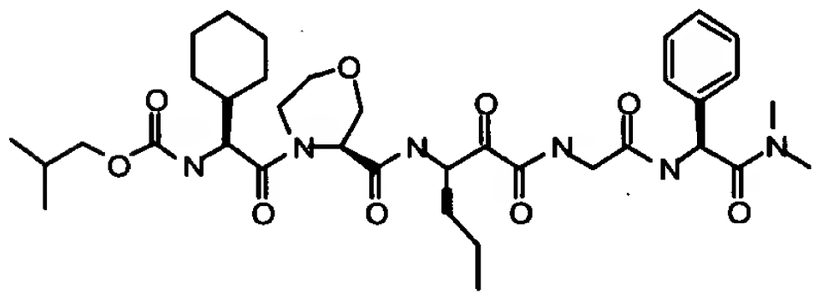


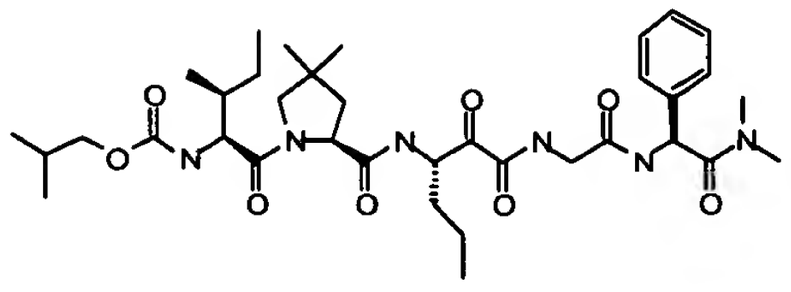


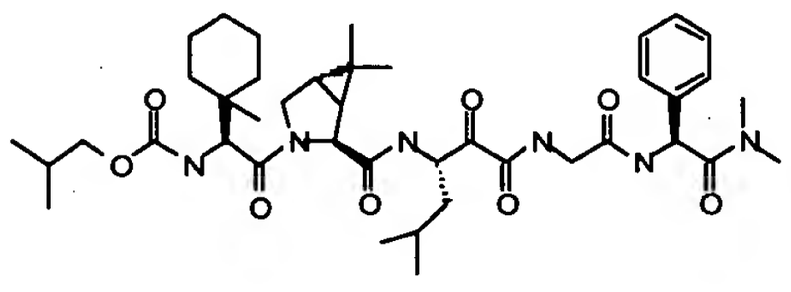


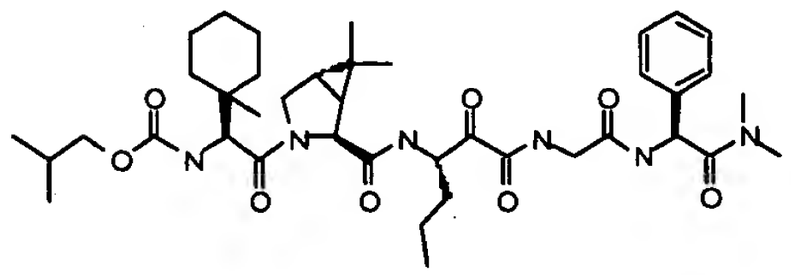


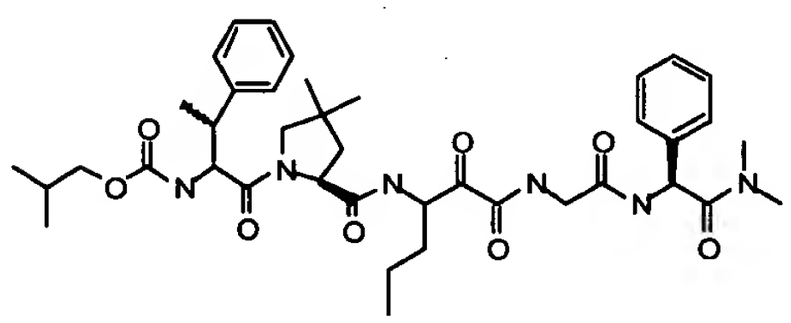


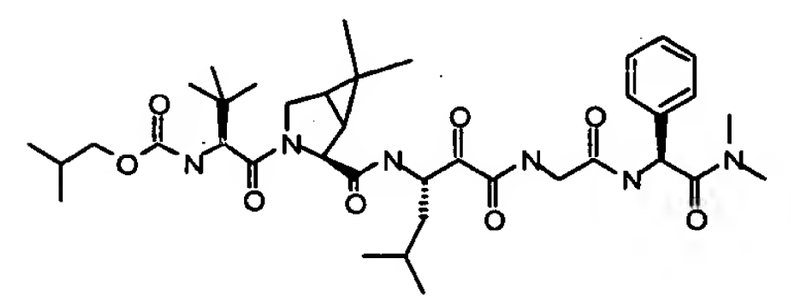


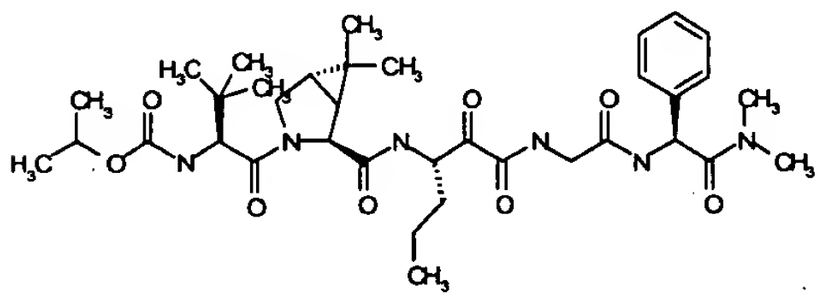


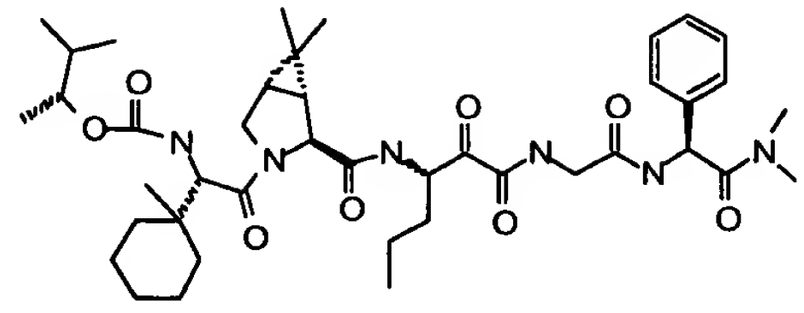


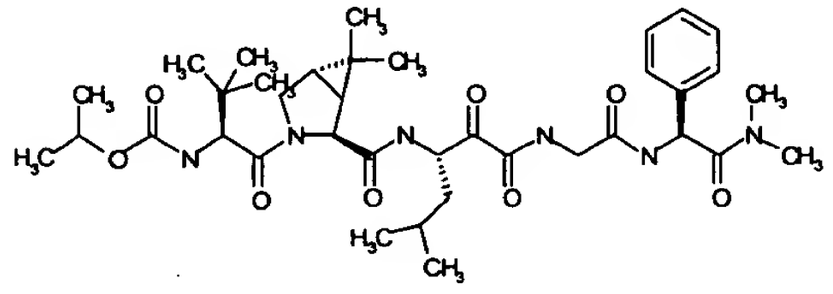


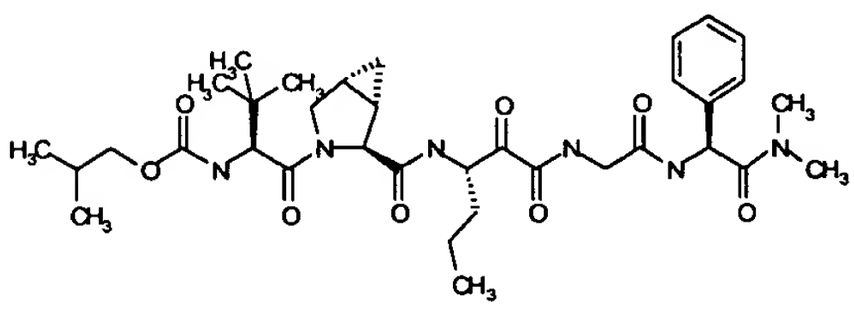


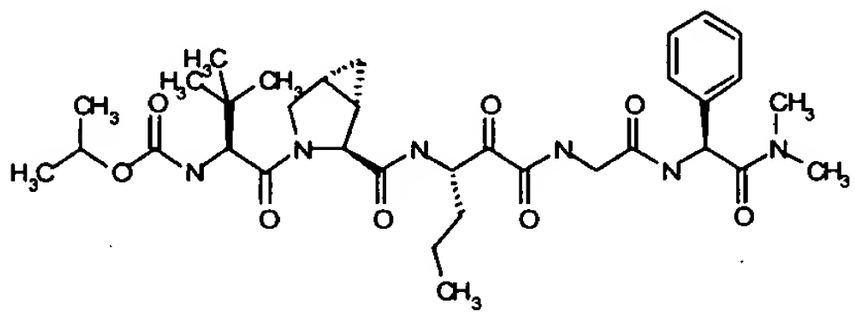


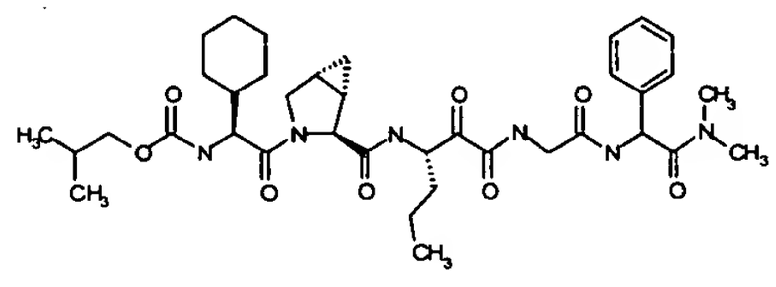


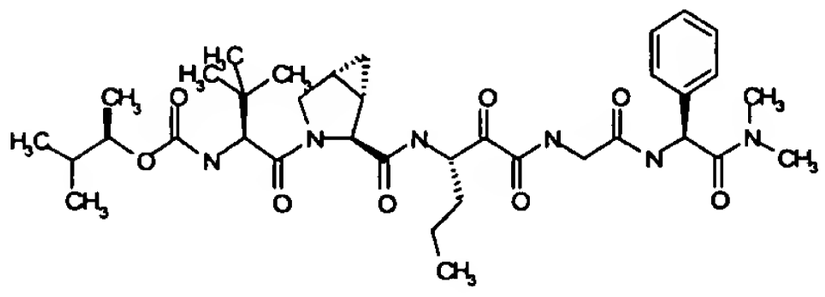


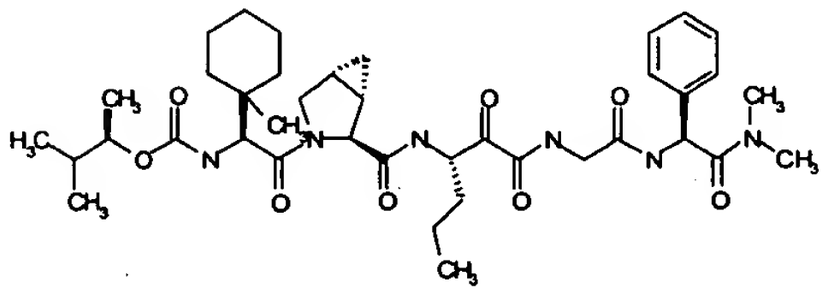












40. (previously presented) A pharmaceutical composition for treating disorders associated with the hepatitis C virus (HCV), said composition comprising therapeutically effective amount of one or more compounds in claim 39 and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

41. (original) The pharmaceutical composition of claim 40, additionally containing an antiviral agent.

42. (currently amended) The pharmaceutical composition of claim 41, ~~still additionally~~further containing an interferon or pegylated-interferon alpha conjugate.

43. (original) The pharmaceutical composition of claim 42, wherein said antiviral agent is ribavirin and said interferon is α-interferon.

44. (original) A method of treatment of a hepatitis C virus associated disorder, comprising administering an effective amount of one or more compounds of claim 39.

45. (original) A method of modulating the activity of hepatitis C virus (HCV) protease, comprising contacting HCV protease with one or more compounds of claim 39.

46. (original) A method of treating, preventing, or ameliorating one or more symptoms of hepatitis C, comprising administering an effective amount of one or more compounds of claim 39.

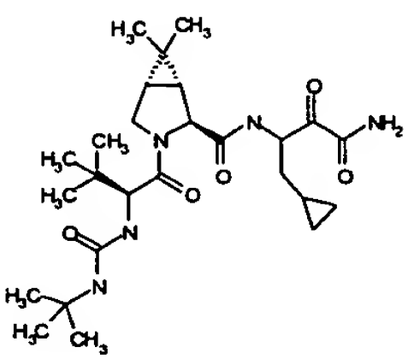
47. (original) The method of claim 45, wherein the HCV protease is the NS3/NS4a protease.

48. (original) The method of claim 47, wherein the compound or compounds inhibit HCV NS3/NS4a protease.

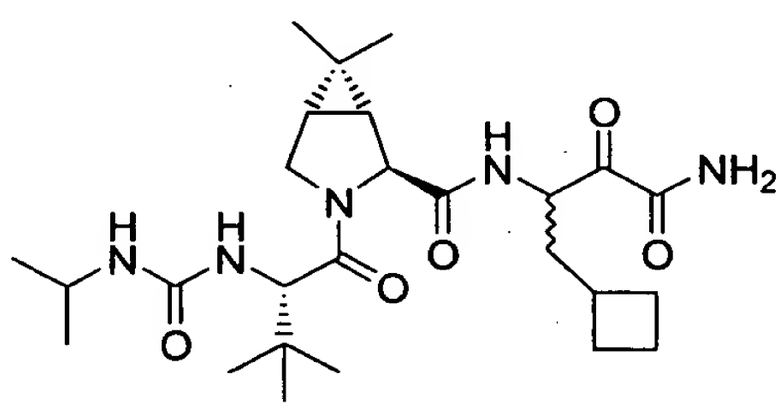
49. (original) A method of modulating the processing of hepatitis C virus (HCV) polypeptide, comprising contacting a composition containing the HCV polypeptide under conditions in which the polypeptide is processed with one or more compounds of claim 39.

50. (canceled)

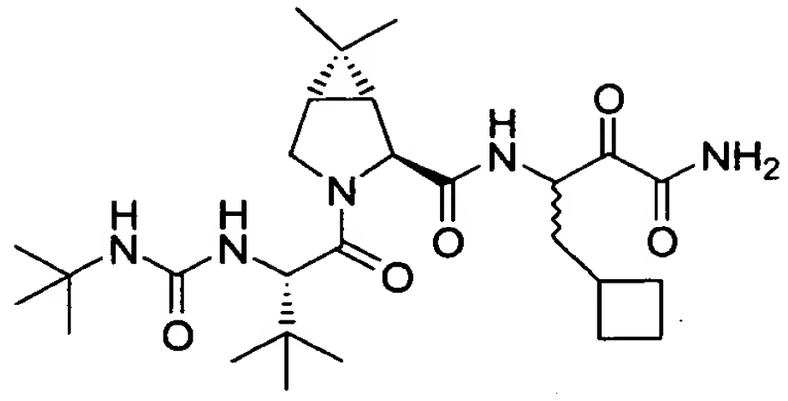
51. (previously presented) A compound exhibiting hepatitis C virus (HCV) protease inhibitory activity, including enantiomers, stereoisomers, rotamers, tautomers, racemates and prodrug of said compound, and pharmaceutically acceptable salts or solvates of said compound, or of said prodrug, said compound being the compound of structure shown below:



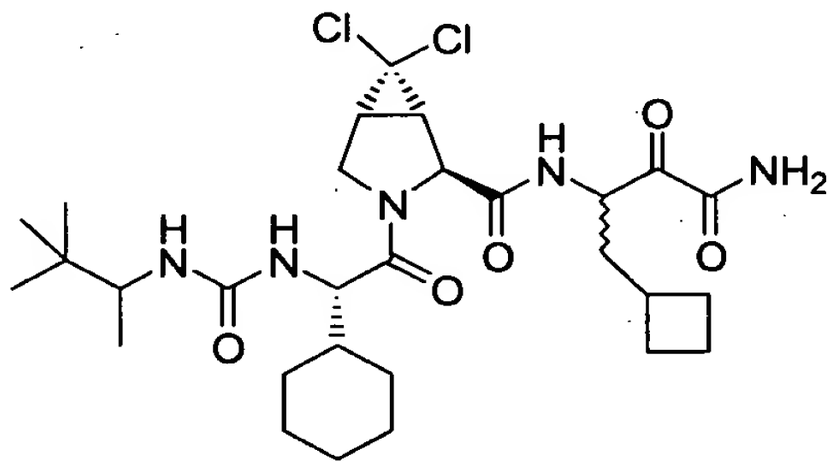
52. (previously presented) A compound exhibiting hepatitis C virus (HCV) protease inhibitory activity, including enantiomers, stereoisomers, rotamers, tautomers, racemates and prodrug of said compound, and pharmaceutically acceptable salts or solvates of said compound, or of said prodrug, said compound being the compound of structure shown below:



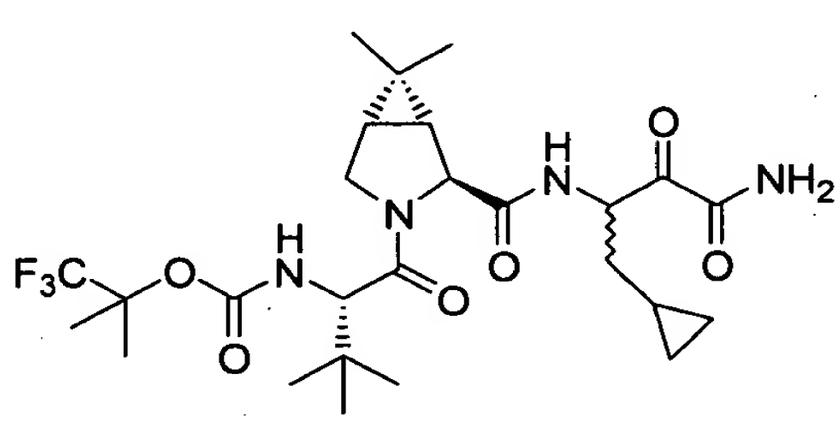
53. (previously presented) A compound exhibiting hepatitis C virus (HCV) protease inhibitory activity, including enantiomers, stereoisomers, rotamers, tautomers, racemates and prodrug of said compound, and pharmaceutically acceptable salts or solvates of said compound, or of said prodrug, said compound being the compound of structure shown below:



54. (previously presented) A compound exhibiting hepatitis C virus (HCV) protease inhibitory activity, including enantiomers, stereoisomers, rotamers, tautomers, racemates and prodrug of said compound, and pharmaceutically acceptable salts or solvates of said compound, or of said prodrug, said compound being the compound of structure shown below:

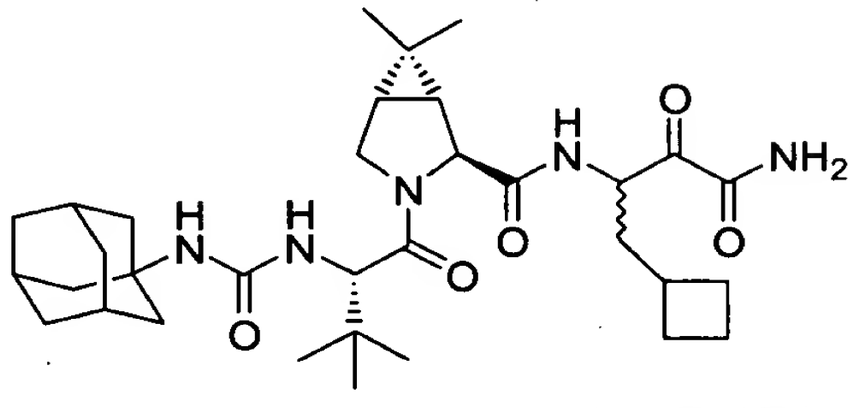


55. (previously presented) A compound exhibiting hepatitis C virus (HCV) protease inhibitory activity, including enantiomers, stereoisomers, rotamers, tautomers, racemates and prodrug of said compound, and pharmaceutically acceptable salts or solvates of said compound, or of said prodrug, said compound being the compound of structure shown below:

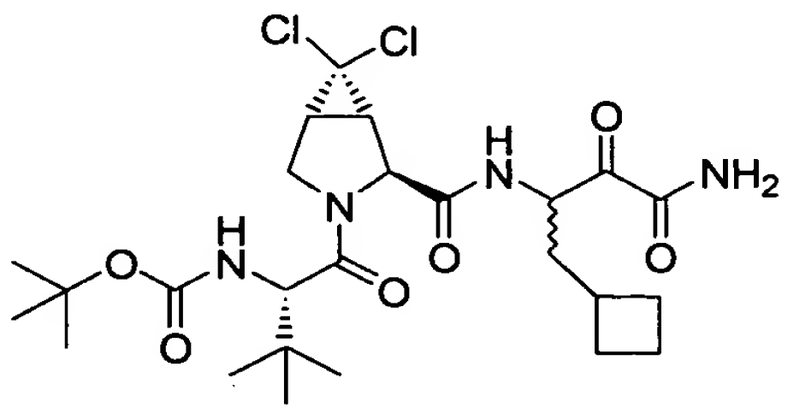


56. (previously presented) A compound exhibiting hepatitis C virus (HCV) protease inhibitory activity, including enantiomers, stereoisomers, rotamers, tautomers, racemates and prodrug of said compound, and pharmaceutically acceptable salts or solvates

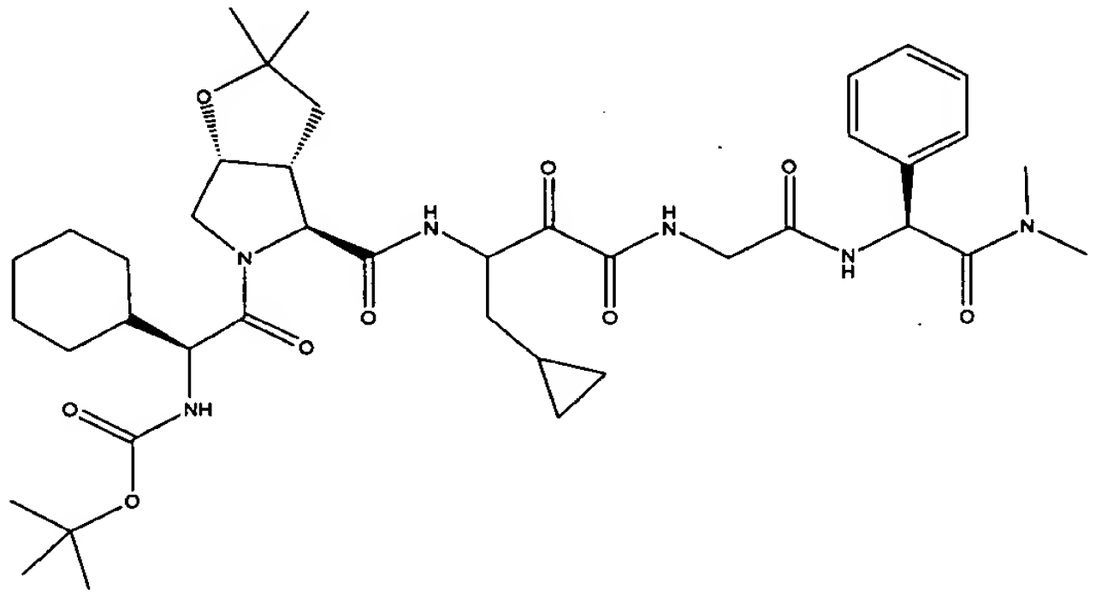
of said compound, or of said prodrug, said compound being the compound of structure shown below:



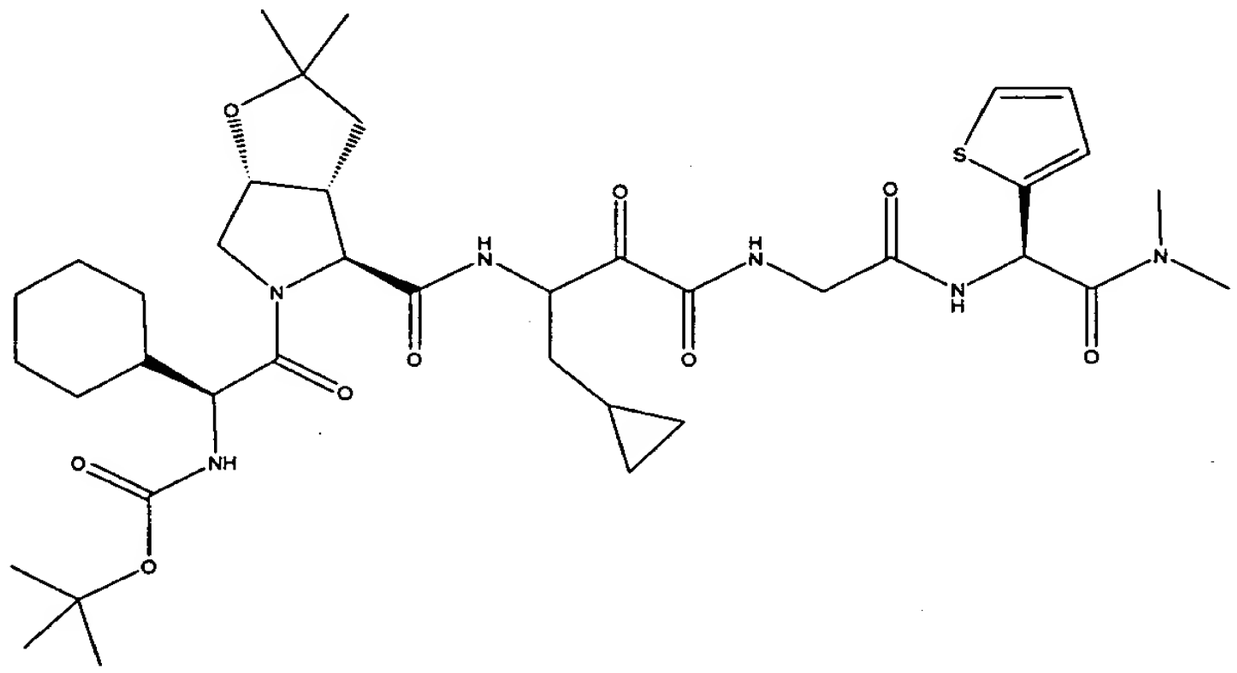
57. (previously presented) A compound exhibiting hepatitis C virus (HCV) protease inhibitory activity, including enantiomers, stereoisomers, rotamers, tautomers, racemates and prodrug of said compound, and pharmaceutically acceptable salts or solvates of said compound, or of said prodrug, said compound being the compound of structure shown below:



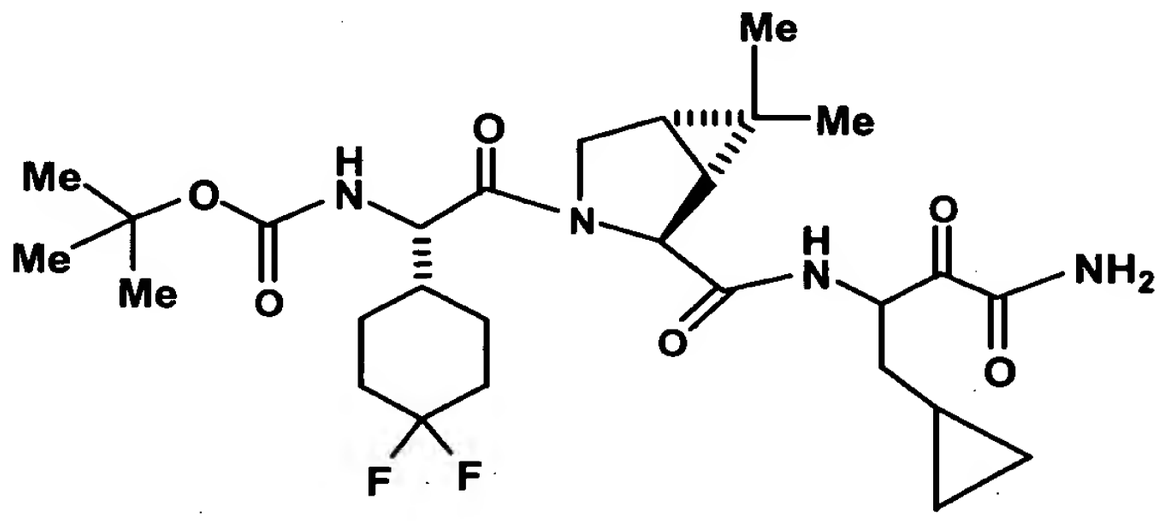
58. (previously presented) A compound exhibiting hepatitis C virus (HCV) protease inhibitory activity, including enantiomers, stereoisomers, rotamers, tautomers, racemates and prodrug of said compound, and pharmaceutically acceptable salts or solvates of said compound, or of said prodrug, said compound being the compound of structure shown below:



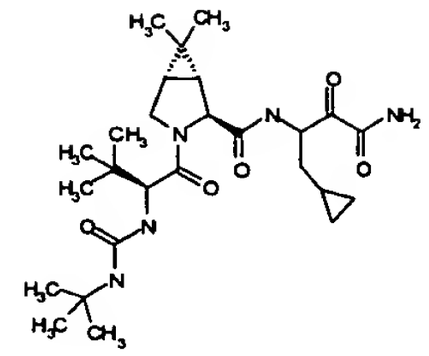
59. (previously presented) A compound exhibiting hepatitis C virus (HCV) protease inhibitory activity, including enantiomers, stereoisomers, rotamers, tautomers, racemates and prodrug of said compound, and pharmaceutically acceptable salts or solvates of said compound, or of said prodrug, said compound being the compound of structure shown below:

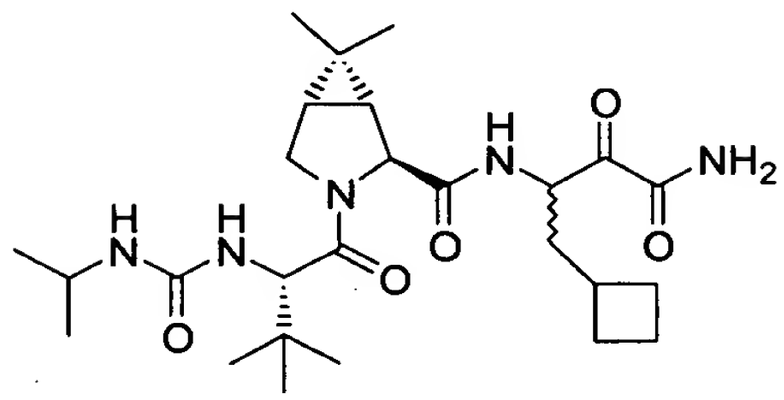


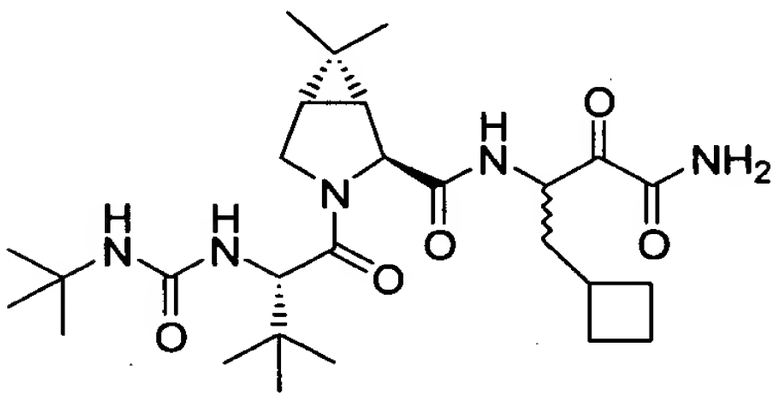
60. (previously presented) A compound exhibiting hepatitis C virus (HCV) protease inhibitory activity, including enantiomers, stereoisomers, rotamers, tautomers, racemates and prodrug of said compound, and pharmaceutically acceptable salts or solvates of said compound, or of said prodrug, said compound being the compound of structure shown below:

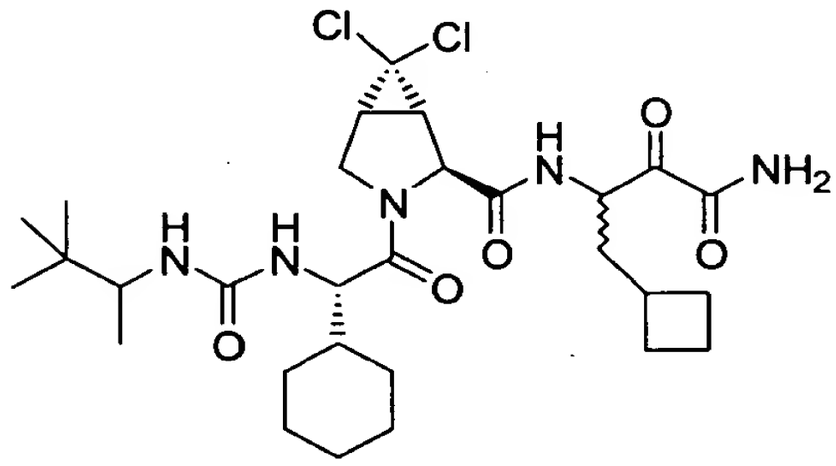


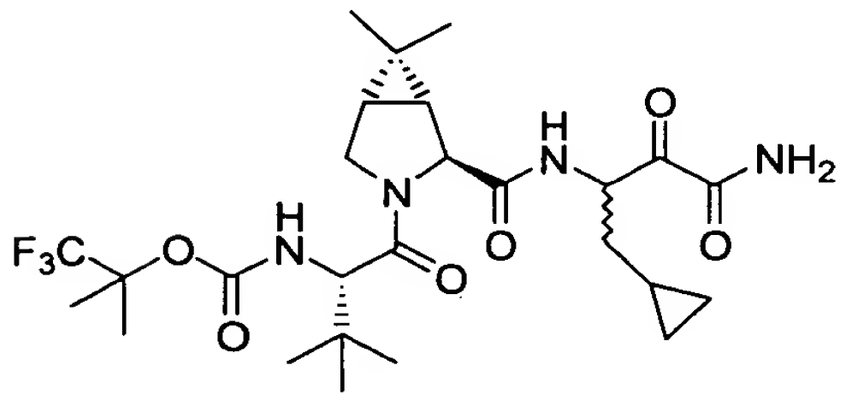
61. (previously presented) A pharmaceutical composition comprising as an active ingredient a compound, including enantiomers, stereoisomers, rotamers, tautomers, racemates and prodrug of said compound, and pharmaceutically acceptable salts or solvates of said compound, or of said prodrug, said compound being selected from the following:

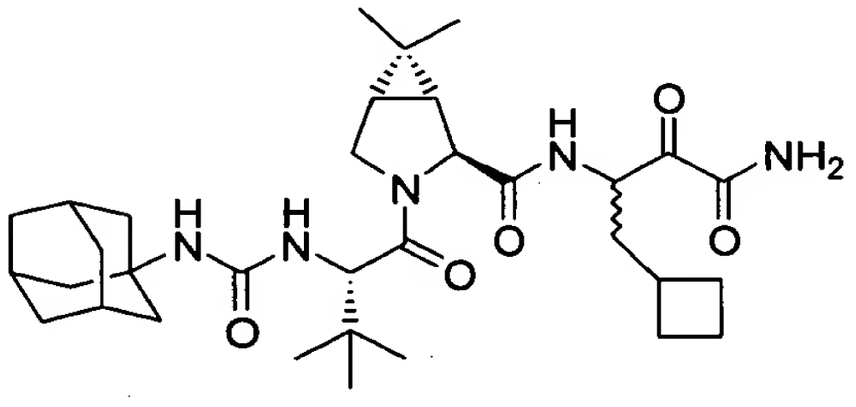


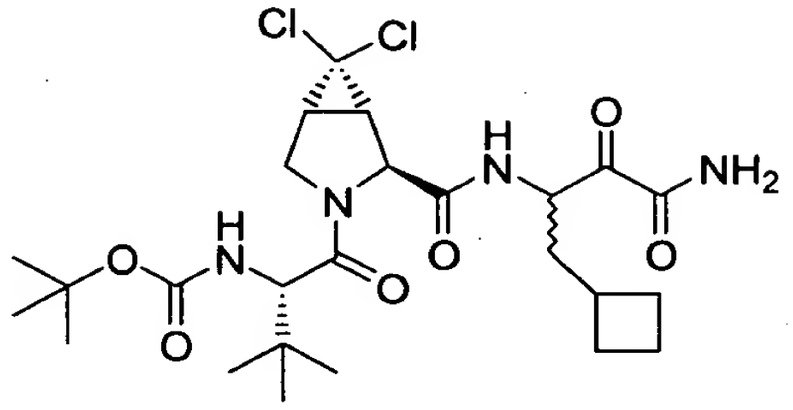


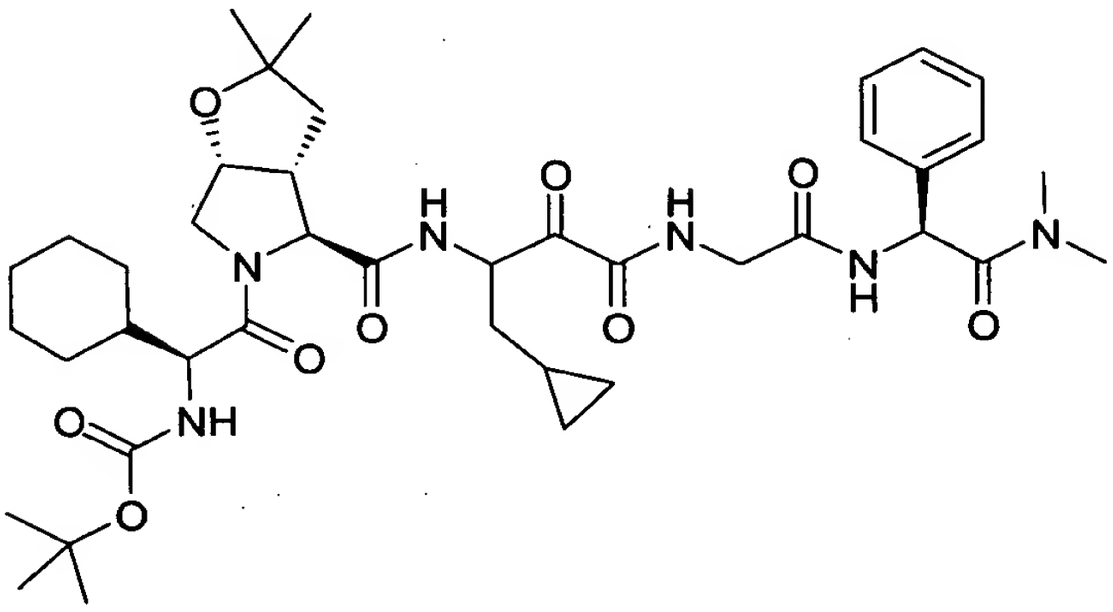


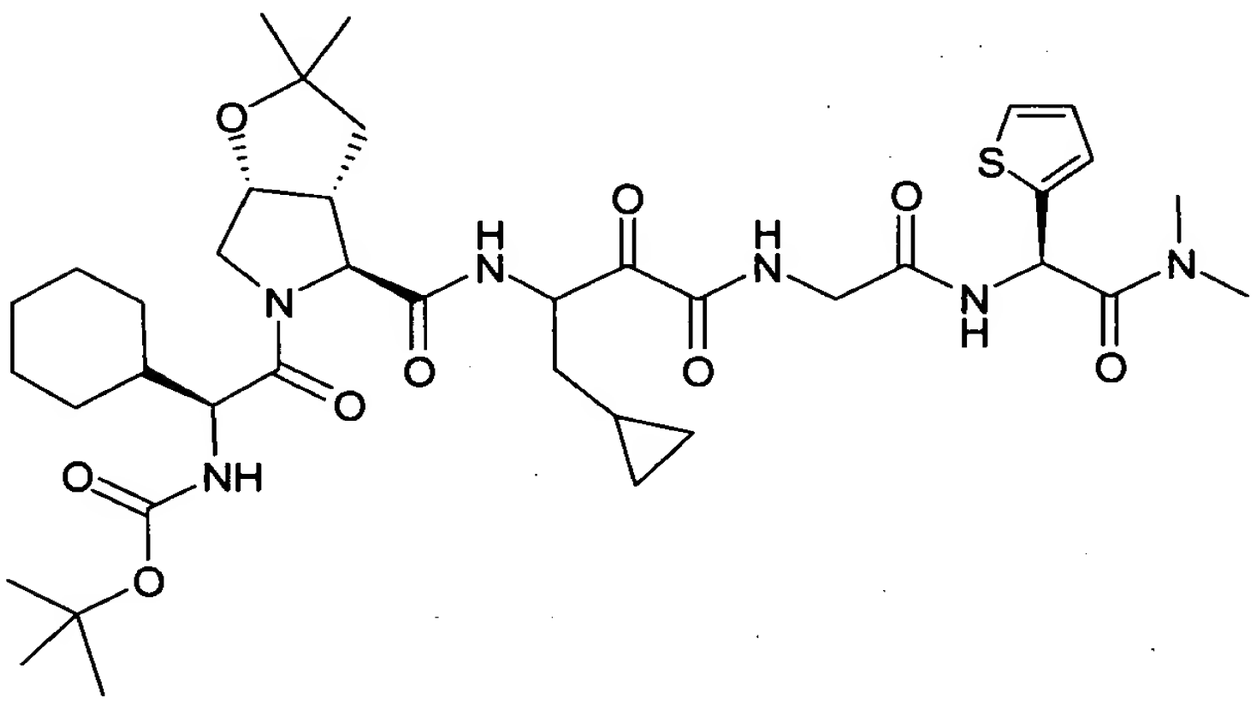


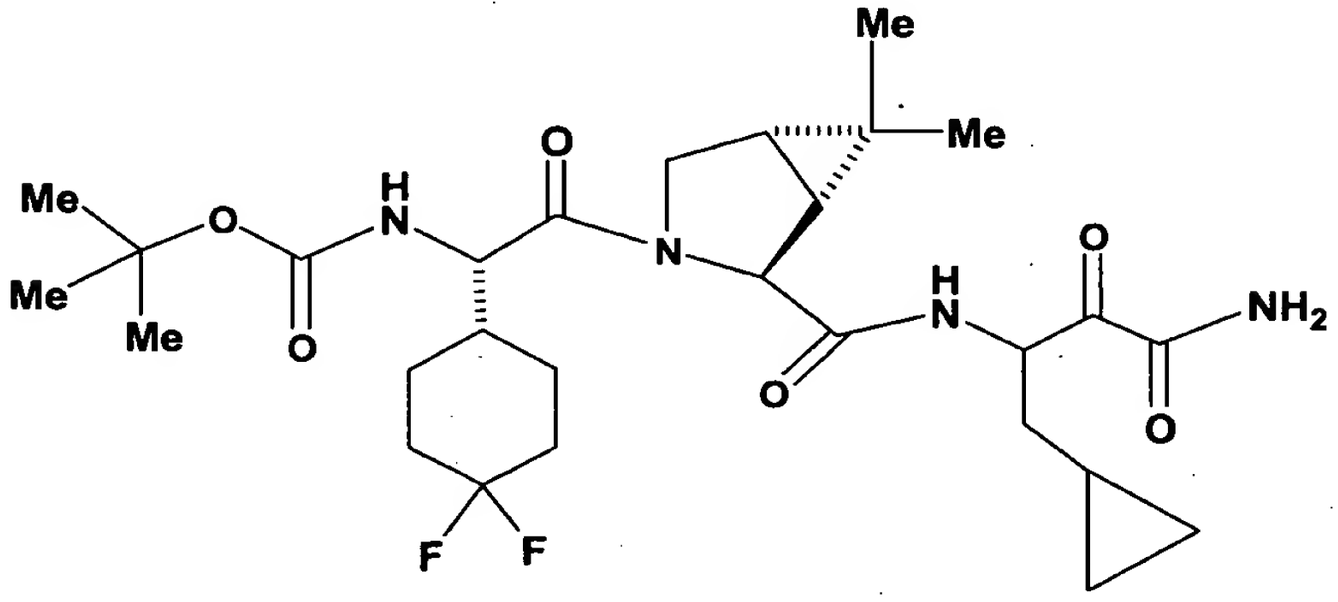










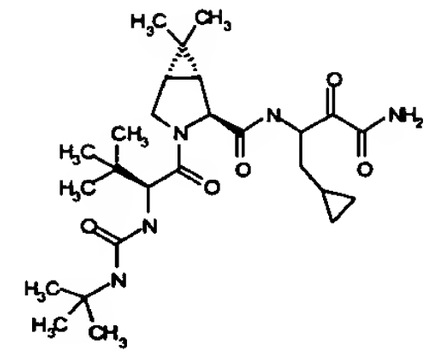


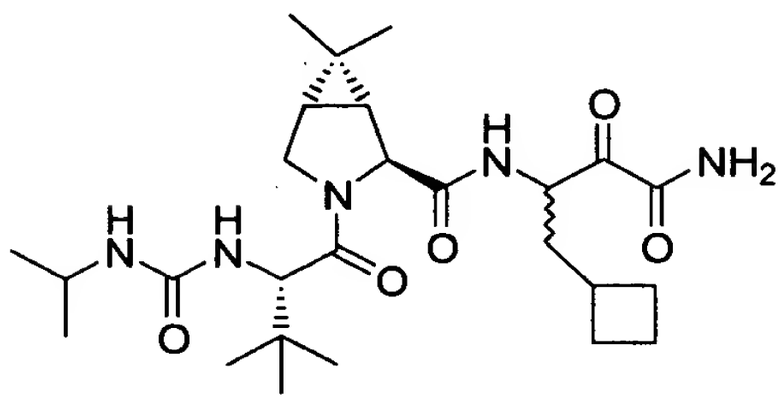
62. (previously presented) The pharmaceutical composition of claim 61, additionally containing an antiviral agent.

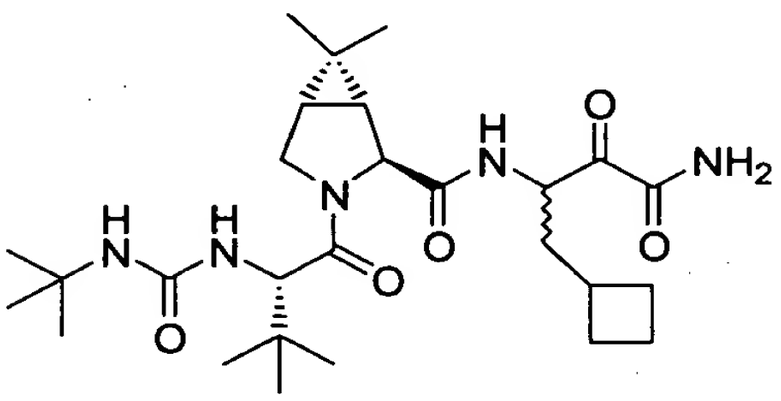
63. (previously presented) The pharmaceutical composition of claim 62, further containing an interferon or pegylated-interferon alpha conjugate.

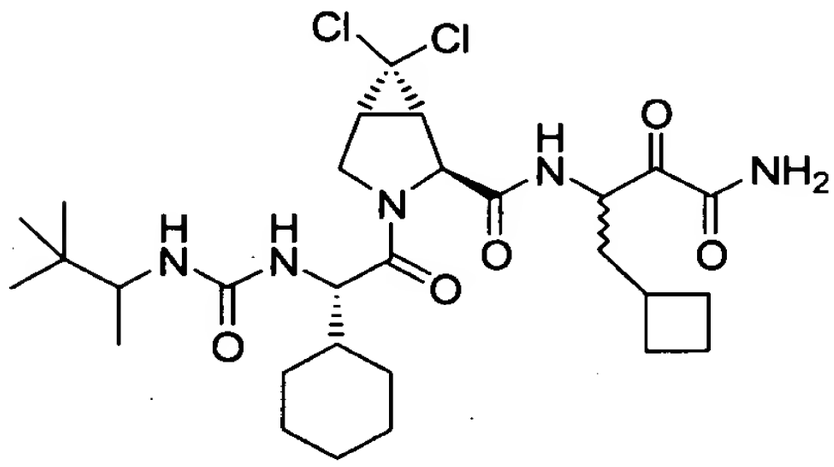
64. (previously presented) The pharmaceutical composition of claim 63, wherein said antiviral agent is ribavirin and said interferon is α-interferon.

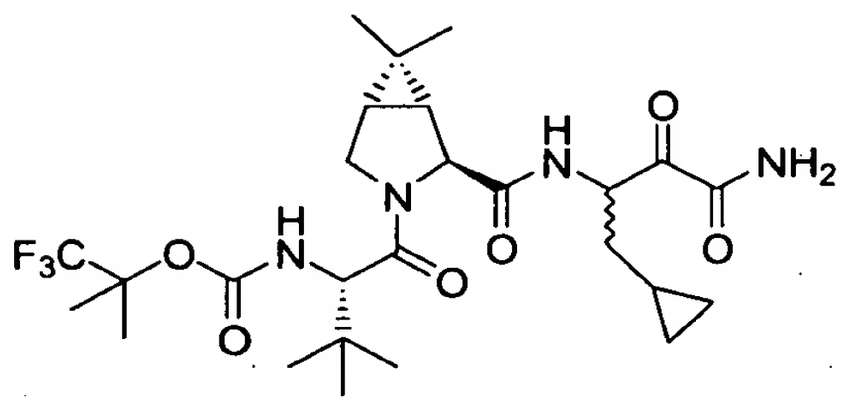
65. (previously presented) A method of treating disorders associated with the HCV, said method comprising administering to a patient in need of such treatment, a pharmaceutical composition which comprises therapeutically effective amounts of a compound, including enantiomers, stereoisomers, rotamers, tautomers, racemates and prodrug of said compound, and pharmaceutically acceptable salts or solvates of said compound, or of said prodrug, said compound being selected from the following:

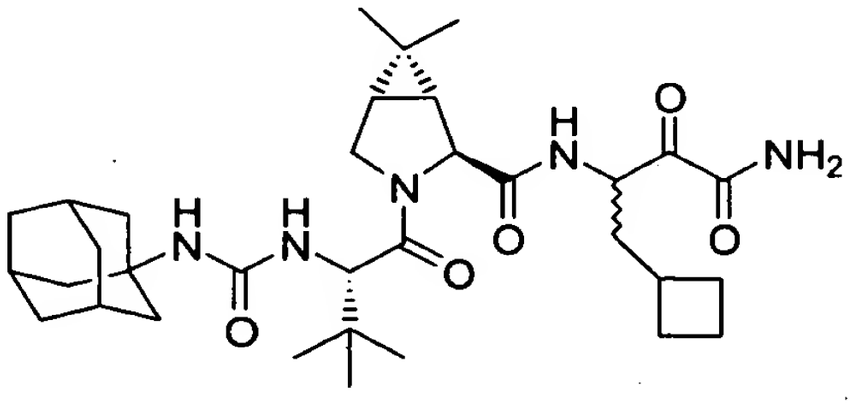


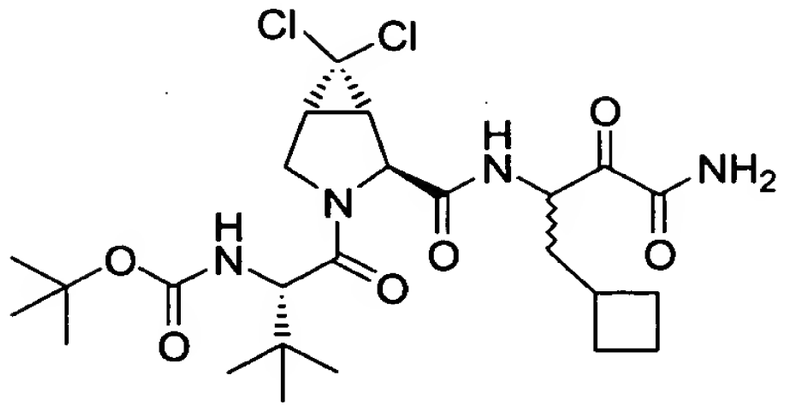


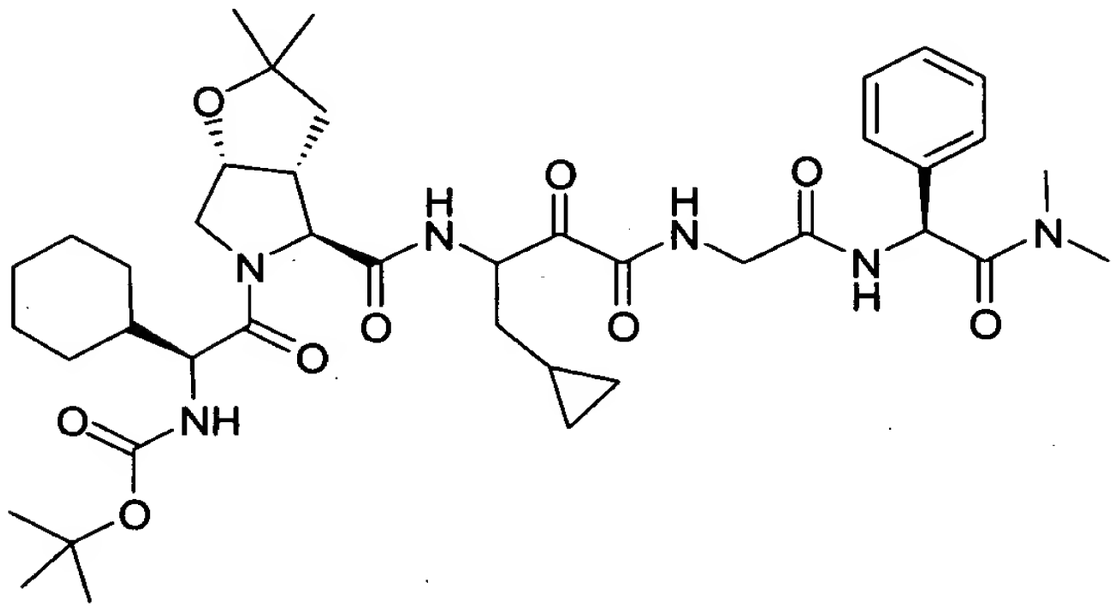


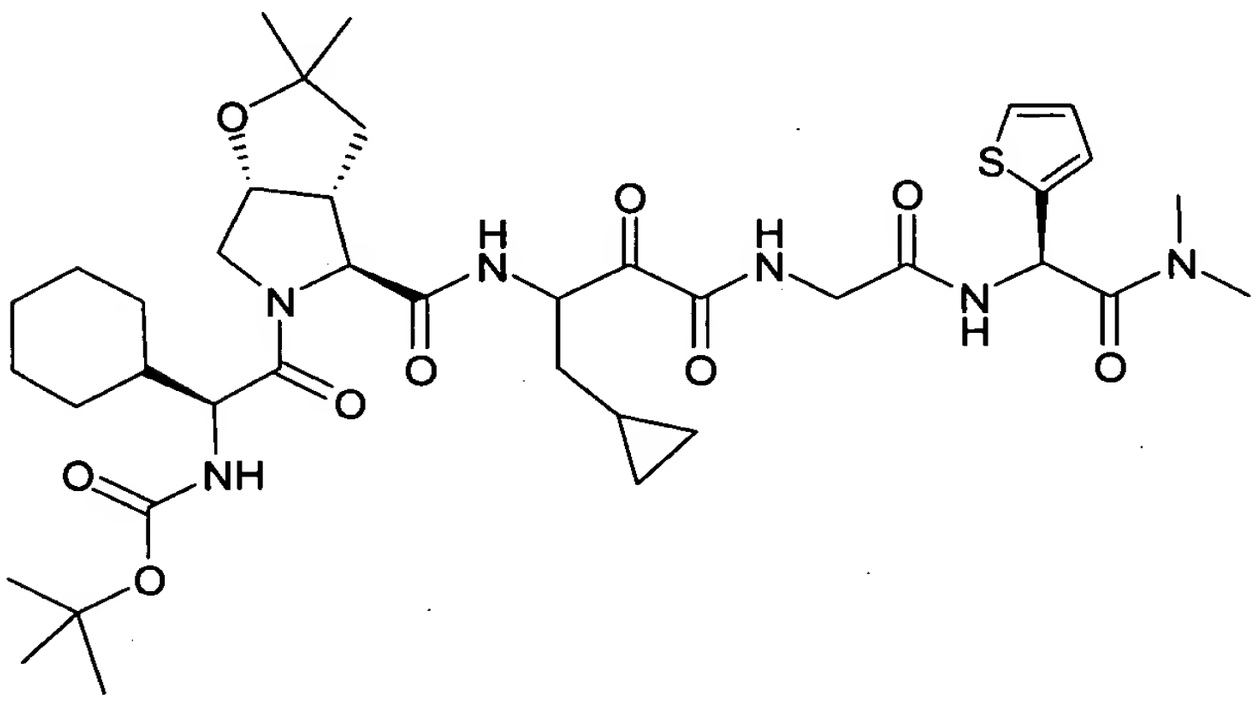


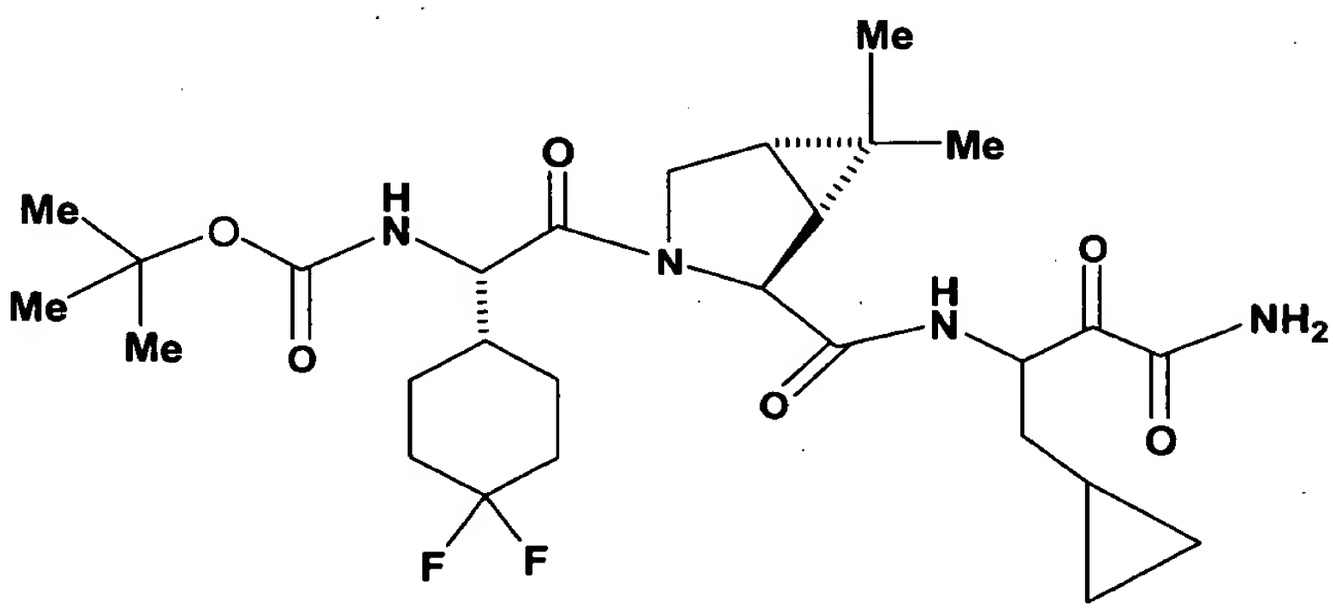




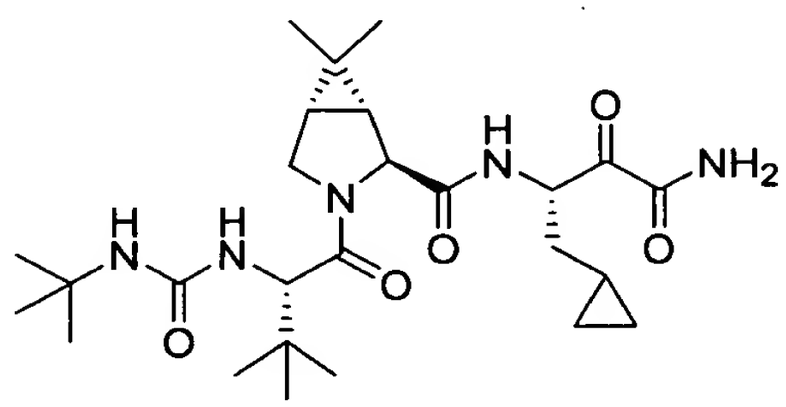




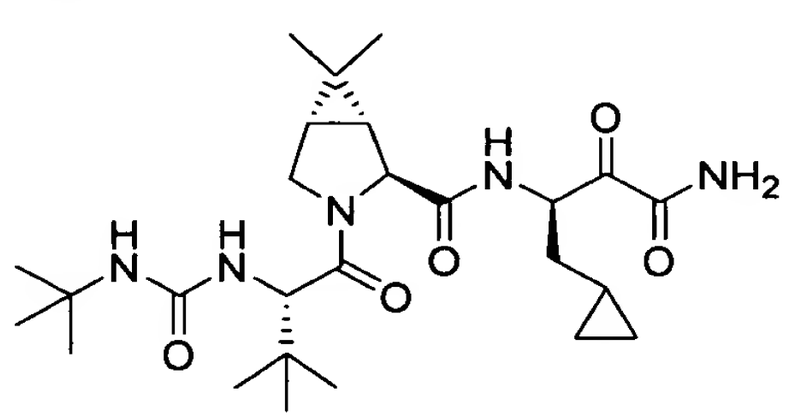




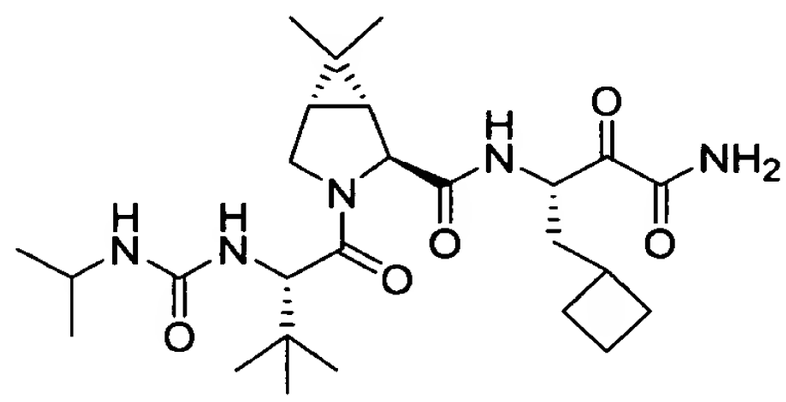
66. (previously presented) A compound of claim 51, which has the formula shown below:



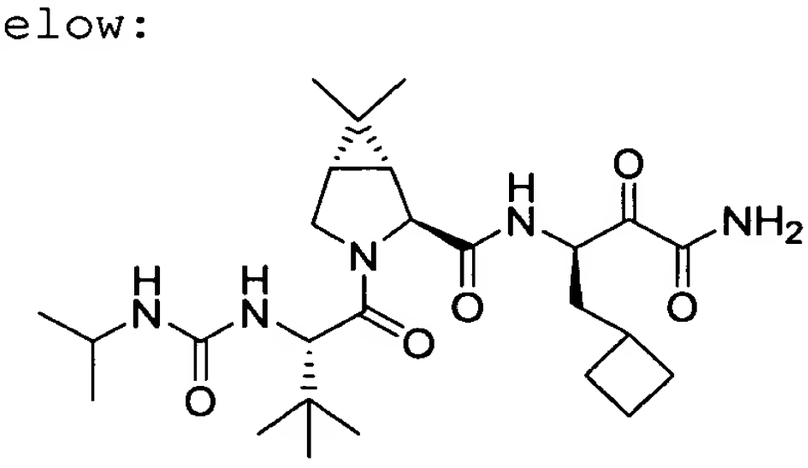
67. (previously presented) A compound of claim 51, which has the formula shown below:



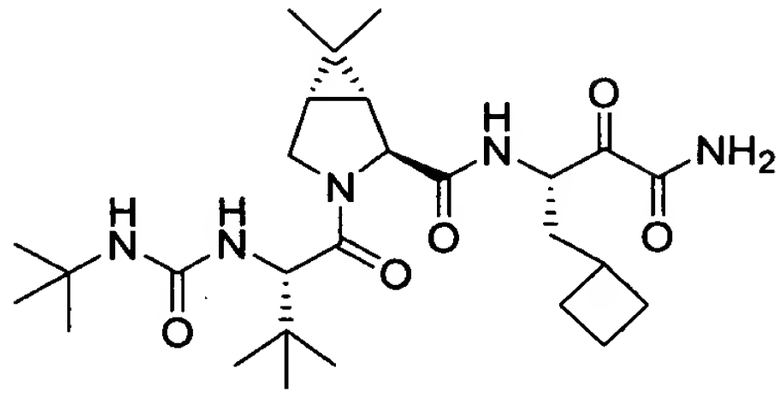
68. (previously presented) A compound of claim 52, which has the formula shown below:



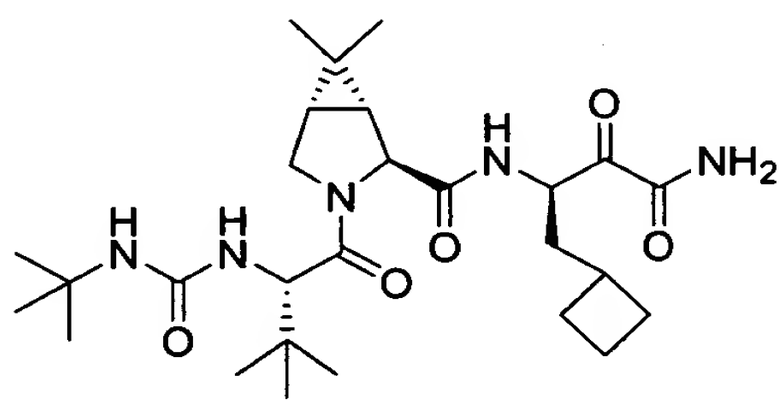
69. (previously presented) A compound of claim 52, which has the formula shown below:



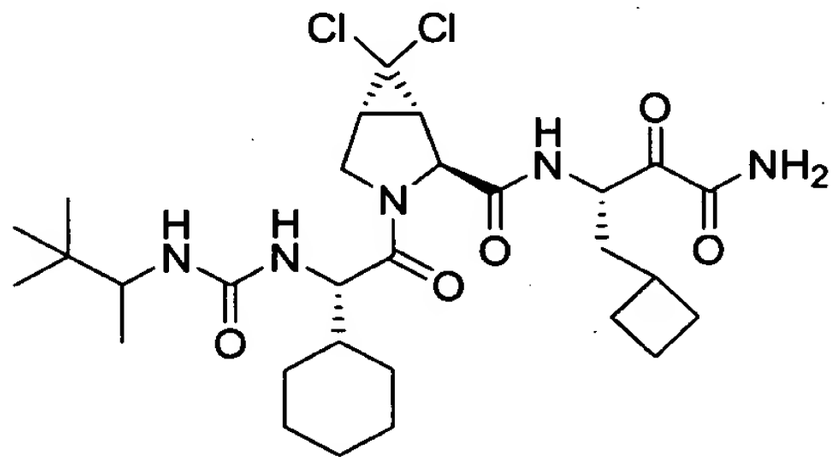
70. (previously presented) A compound of claim 53, which has the formula shown below:



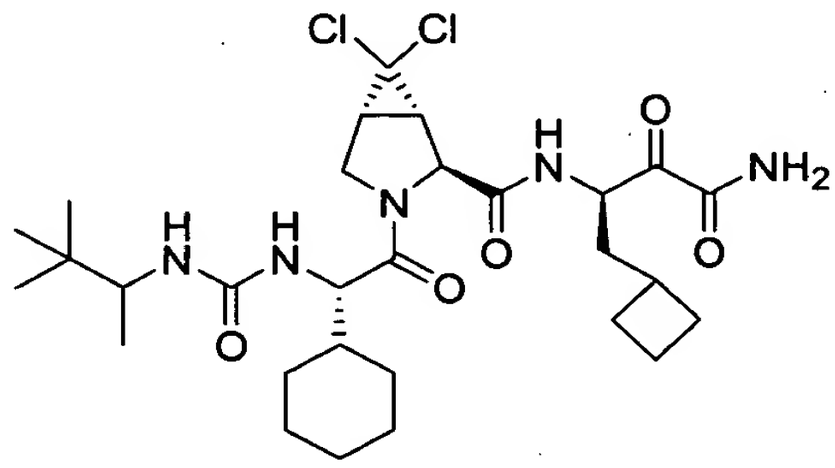
71. (previously presented) A compound of claim 53, which has the formula shown below:



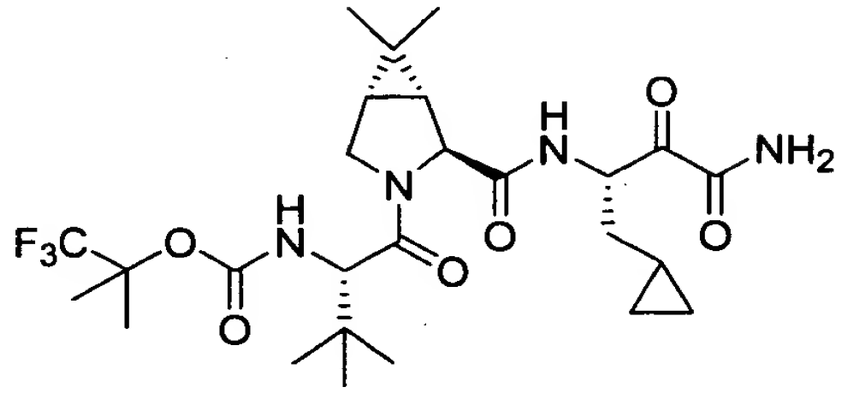
72. (previously presented) A compound of claim 54, which has the formula shown below:



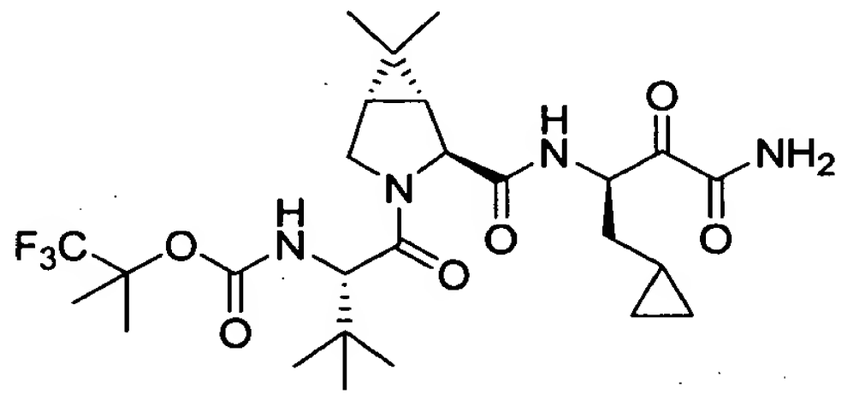
73. (previously presented) A compound of claim 54, which has the formula shown below:



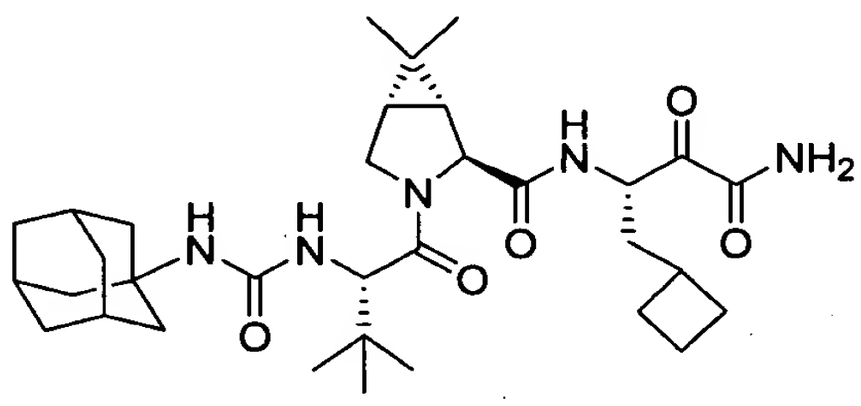
74. (previously presented) A compound of claim 55, which has the formula shown below:



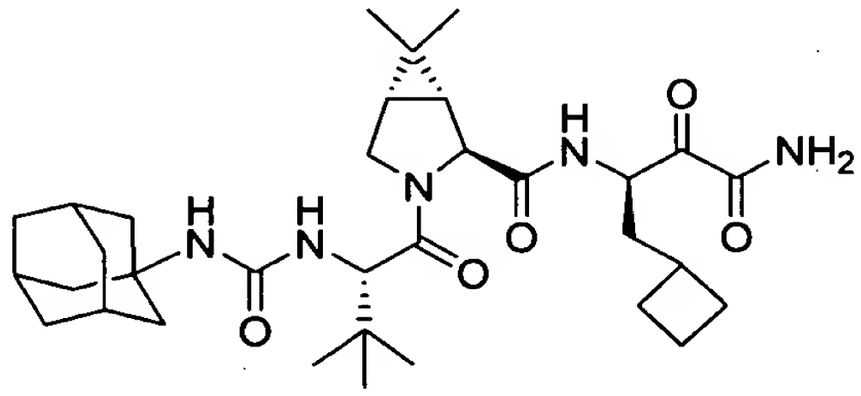
75. (previously presented) A compound of claim 55, which has the formula shown below:



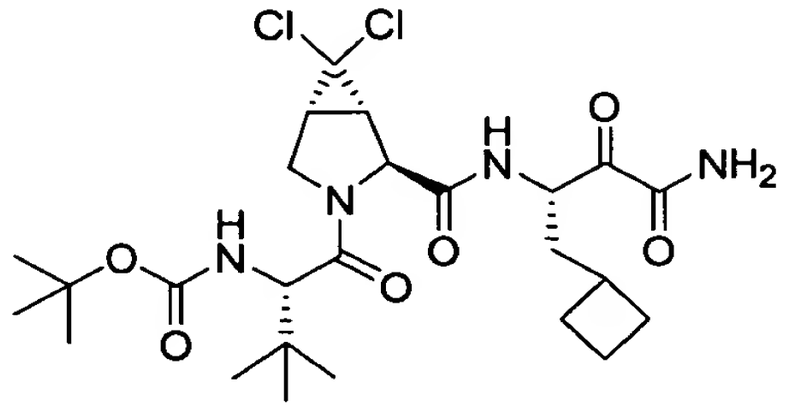
76. (previously presented) A compound of claim 56, which has the formula shown below:



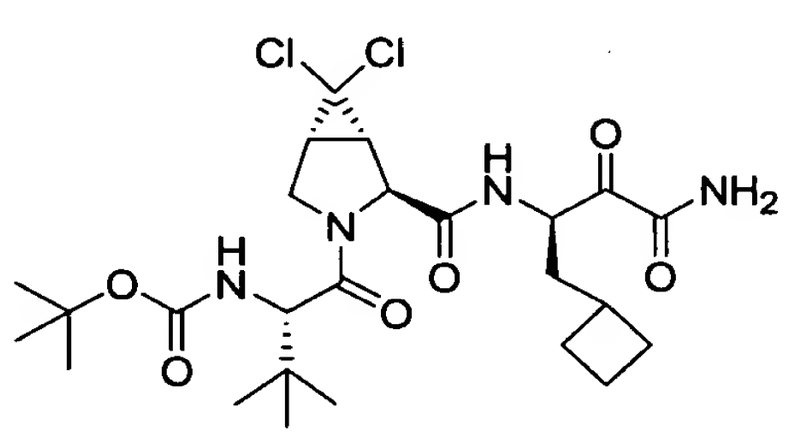
77. (previously presented) A compound of claim 56, which has the formula shown below:



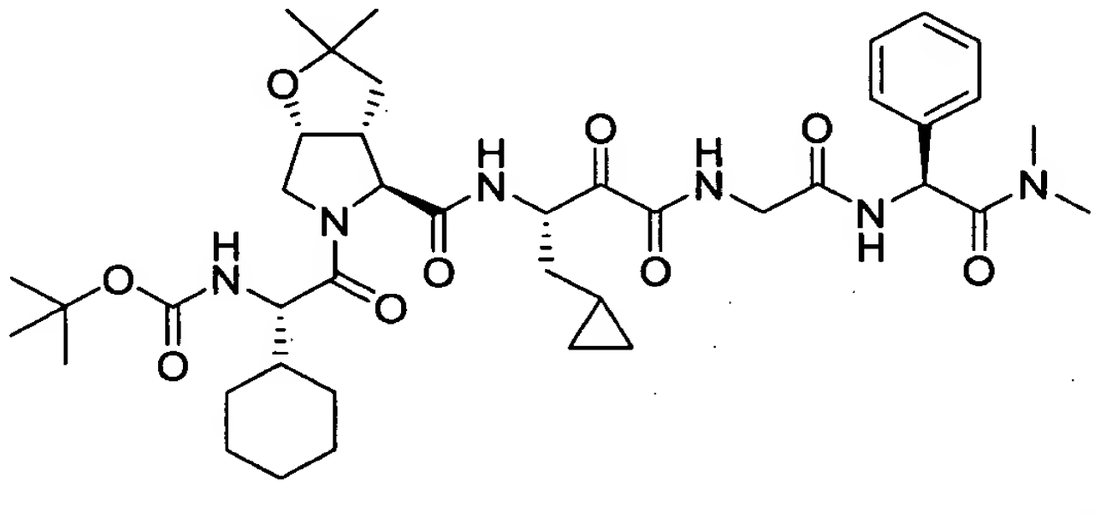
78. (previously presented) A compound of claim 57, which has the formula shown below:



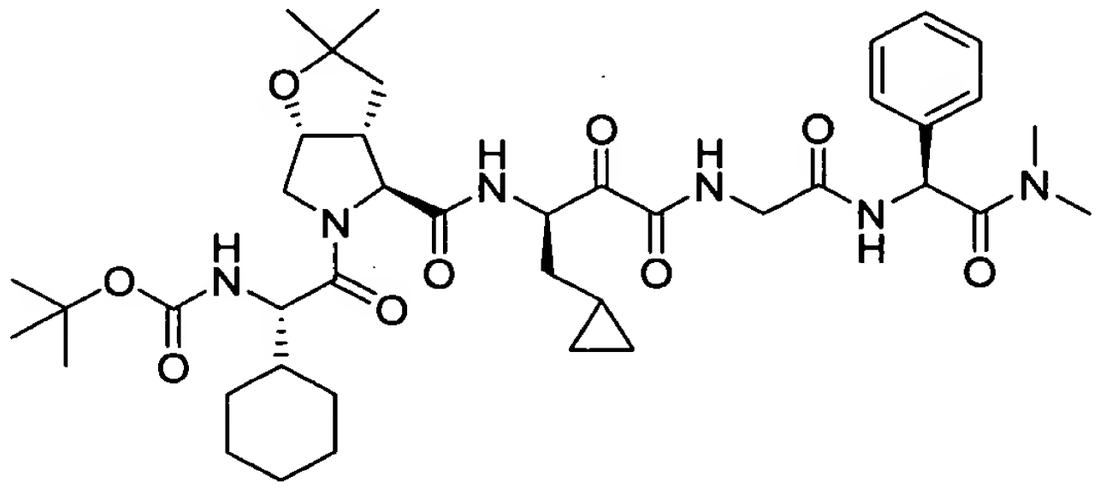
79. (previously presented) A compound of claim 57, which has the formula shown below:



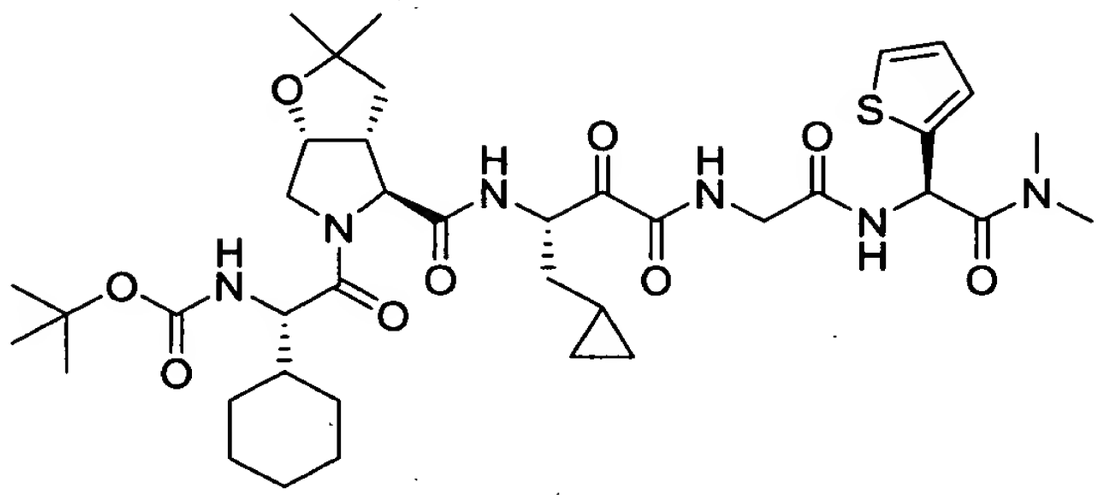
80. (previously presented) A compound of claim 58, which has the formula shown below:



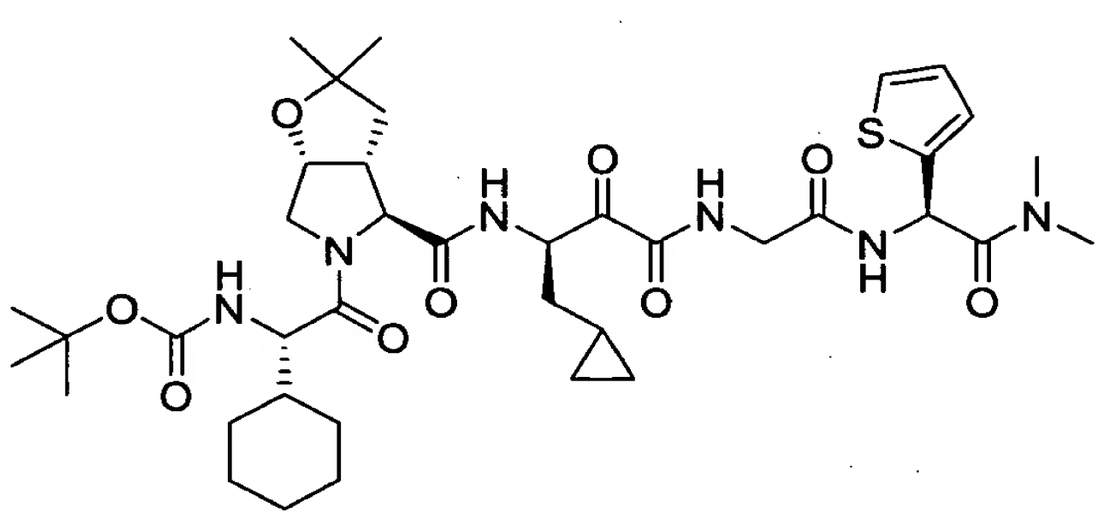
81. (previously presented) A compound of claim 58, which has the formula shown below:



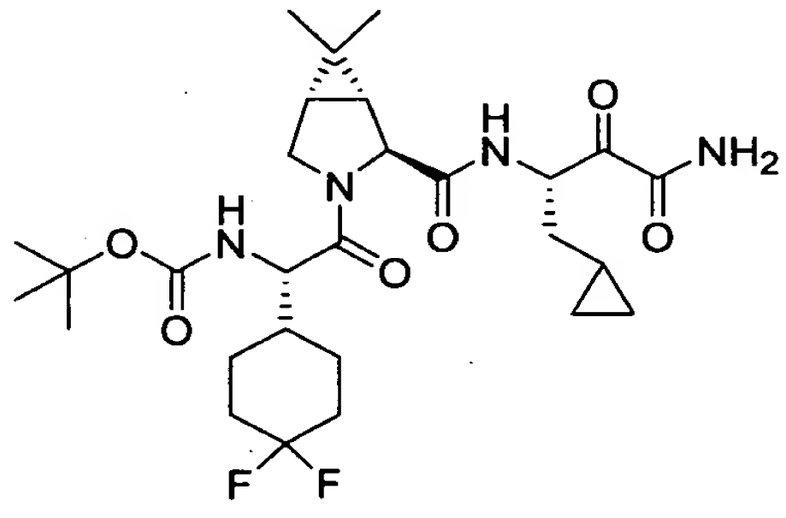
82. (previously presented) A compound of claim 59, which has the formula shown below:



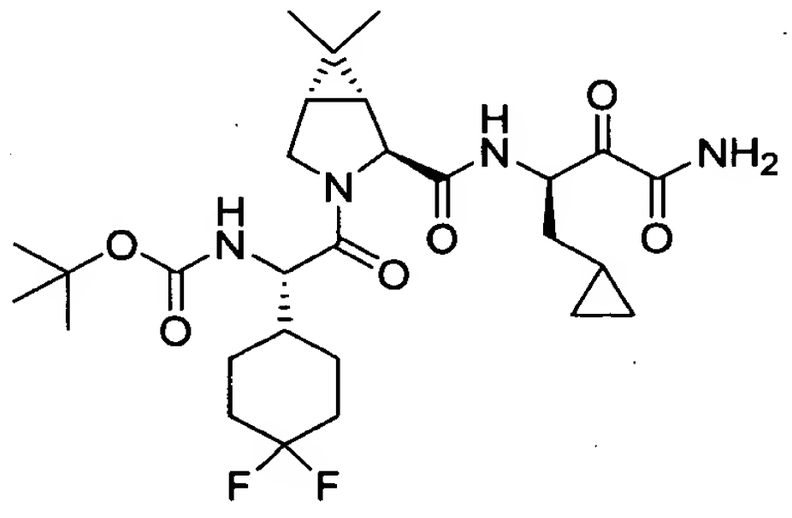
83. (previously presented) A compound of claim 59, which has the formula shown below:



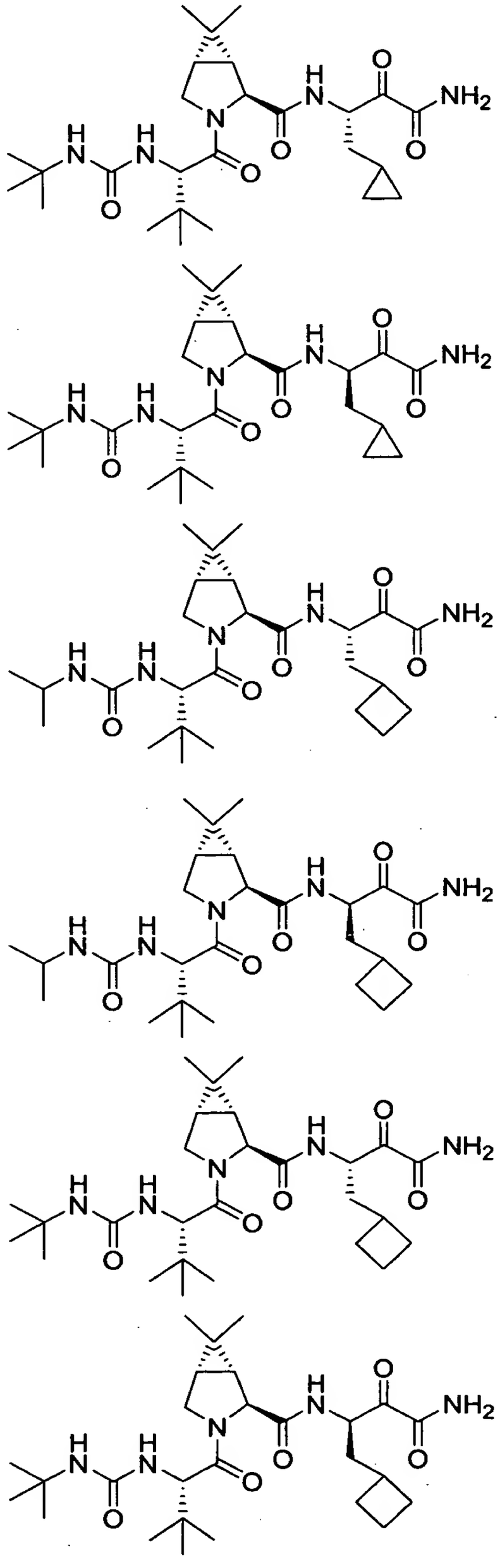
84. (previously presented) A compound of claim 60, which has the formula shown below:

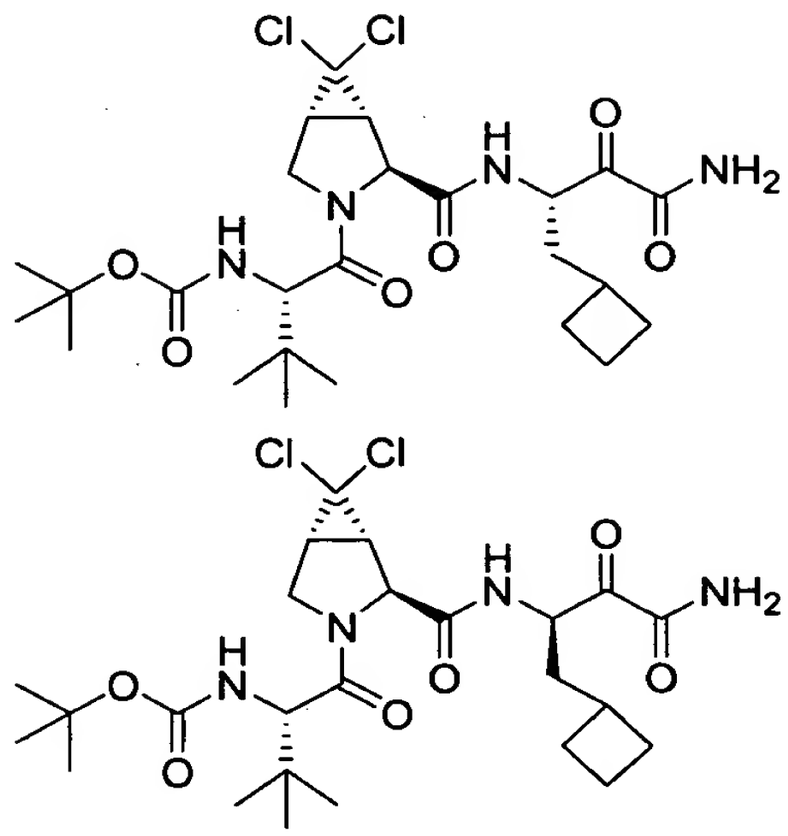


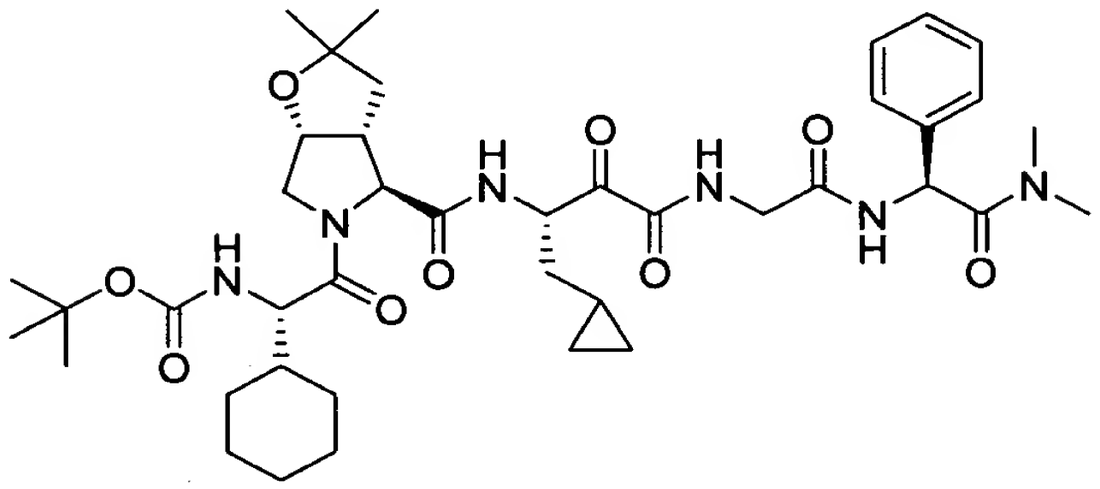
85. (previously presented) A compound of claim 60, which has the formula shown below:

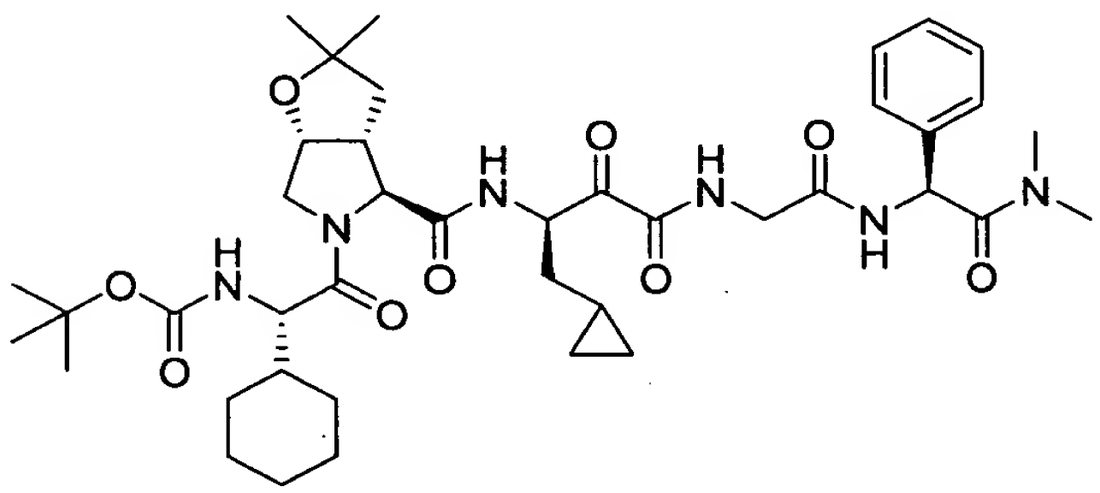


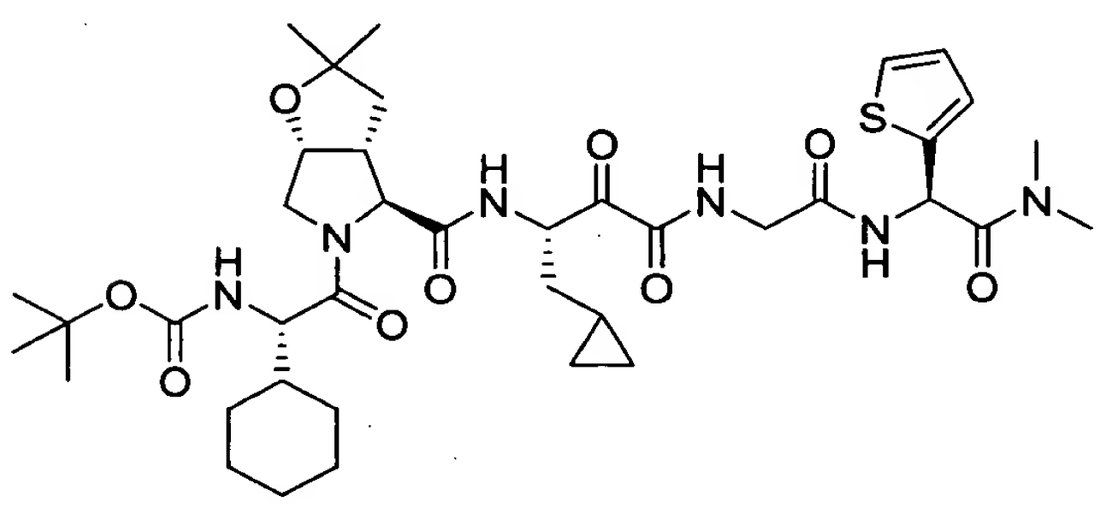
86. (previously presented) The pharmaceutical composition of claim 61, wherein said compound is selected from the following:

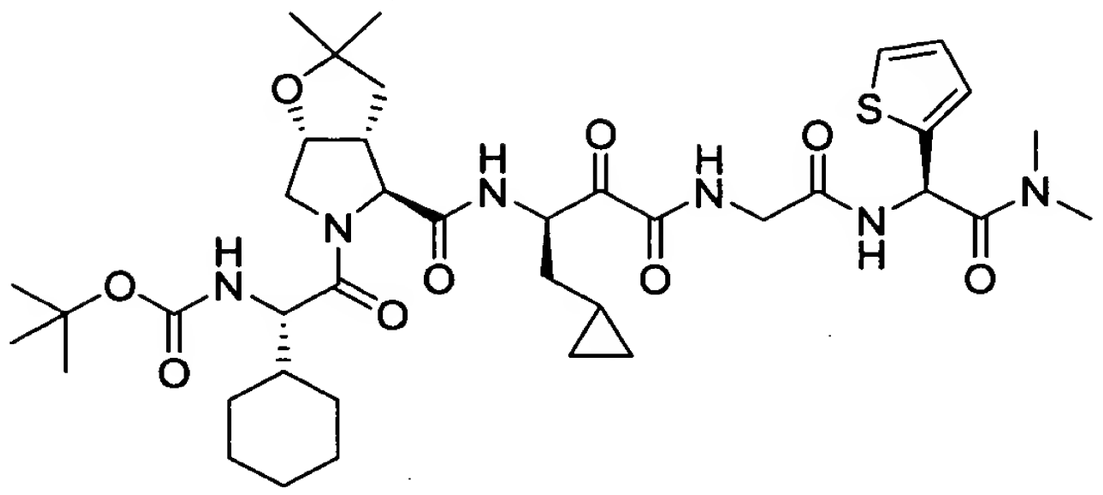


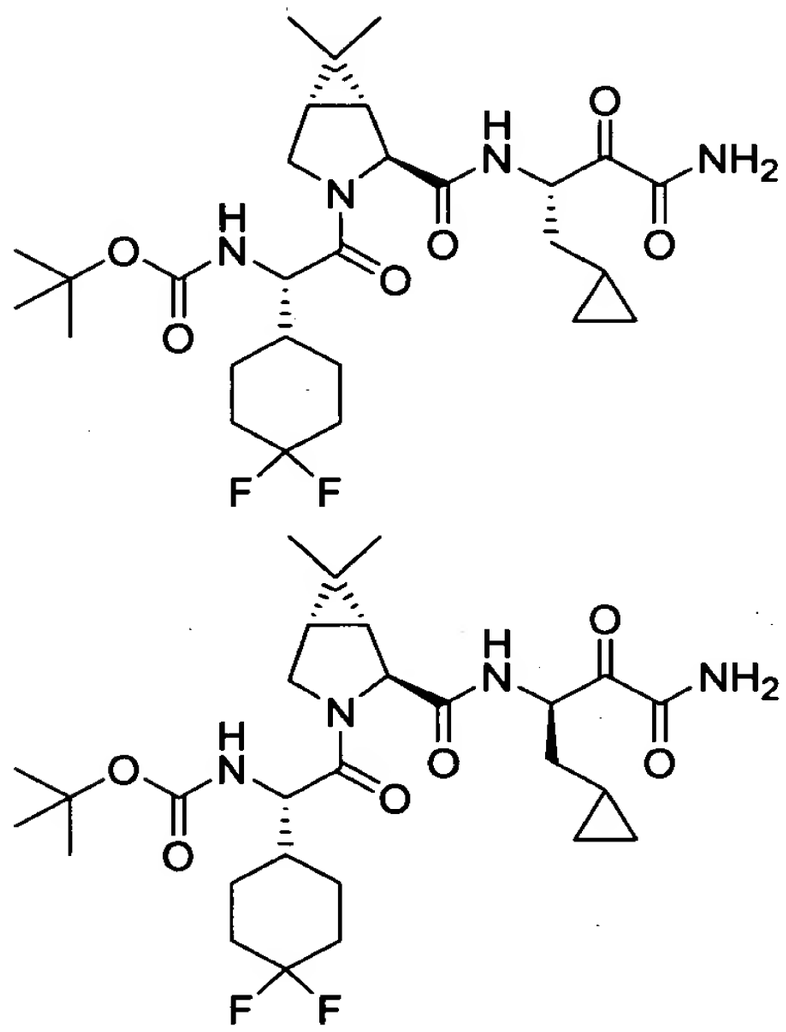












87. (previously presented) The pharmaceutical composition of claim 86, additionally containing an antiviral agent.

88. (previously presented) The pharmaceutical composition of claim 87, additionally containing an interferon or pegylated-interferon alpha conjugate.

89. (previously presented) The pharmaceutical composition of claim 88, wherein said antiviral agent is ribavirin and said interferon is alpha-interferon.

90. (previously presented) The method of claim 65, wherein said compound is selected from the following: